

An ornate, symmetrical decorative frame in a dark, textured color. It features intricate scrollwork, floral motifs, and a central vertical axis. The frame is wider at the top and bottom, tapering slightly in the middle. The top part of the frame is particularly elaborate, with large, swirling acanthus-like leaves. The bottom part also features large, symmetrical scrollwork. The entire frame is set against a dark, textured background.

JACOB'S HEIRESS

ANNETTE L. NOBLE

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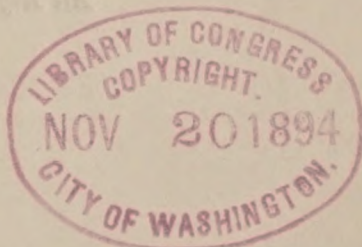


JACOB'S HEIRESS

BY
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"THE RYHOVES OF ANTWERP," "THE PROFESSOR'S GIRLS,"
"AFTER THE FAILURE," ETC.



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JACOB'S HEIRESS.

CHAPTER I.

ONE OF THE PEACE COUNCIL.

IT was a dismal afternoon in early autumn. A mist that was almost rain settled down on the city of Antwerp, making belated wayfarers hasten toward home. We say "belated," for, although it was not past five o'clock, Antwerp streets in that year of our Lord 1584 were unlighted unless by some traveler's lantern or the torchbearers of a more important person.

Honest Burgher Van Schendel trudged laboriously toward his supper, puffing, blowing and muttering as he went. Bakers' boys who passed him promptly yielded him the right of way, perhaps because of his energetic utterances, perhaps because there was more room for them midway in the unpaved street. Herr Van Schendel's velvet doublet was unbuttoned for more freedom in action, displaying his woolen

waistcoat enveloping a form of prodigious girth. The mist was fast making limp his wide starched ruff, into which sank his vast double chin, and so fat were his legs that locomotion was by no means easy. The path was slimy with mud, the daylight almost gone. He looked up for the cathedral, by which he would guide his course across the near square. Lo, it had been swallowed by the fog. Along the way came another traveler, also fat, also vociferous. The fat porker and the fatter burgher might have met, and one or the other have been the worse for the meeting, but suddenly around a corner came a squat little man bearing a torch. The flare of light caused the brute to flee and the burgher to grumble:

“Why not wait to meet me on my mine own threshold, Jacob?”

“’Tis not so late as it seems, master. I had been earlier, but Vrouw Van Schendel sent me elsewhere on an errand.”

“For some nonsense, I grant ye. Have a care, fellow, or you will set the town on fire, you carry your torch so wildly.”

Jacob grinned as if he had been praised, and the two plodded on like the giant and the

pigmy in a fairy-tale. In the bright light Van Schendel's face came out plainly—a face by no means dull or peevish. He had a high and handsome white forehead, keen gray eyes, a rugged nose, a clear skin flushing with motion and emotion, for he was in a way as sensitive as fat. His long peaked beard was red, but no hair covered his firm not unpleasant mouth. He looked younger than the fifty years to which he confessed. His guide was a dwarf, alert in movement, slow in speech, almost stupid enough in manner for a fool. His lack-lustre blue eyes and drawn-down mouth gave him a sullen air, but his looks belied him. Jacob was ever prompt to serve his friends, and rarely beheld his master without a grin of welcome, no matter how his master greeted him. This night his big feet slapped along through the puddles, and he did not once turn his head to wonder at Van Schendel's muttering, now of corn, now of the butchers' guild, then of St. Aldegonde, the new burgomaster, and again of the *Blau-garen Dyke*.

“’Tis easy to tell where master has been this day” muttered the dwarf in his turn. “Nothing on land or water fills him so full of fight as a

meeting of the Peace Council. Hey! what is here mewling like a starved kitten?"

Jacob stopped with a lurch of the torch backward that might have set Van Schendel's ruff on fire had it been as stiff and rampant as usual, instead of hanging limp; then, lowering the light, there came into sight a slim, fair-haired little girl, shivering, sobbing and begging. The older man grumbled at the delay—was willing to give her something, but loath to hunt for his purse. Jacob, oddly enough, seemed only interested in her old gown. It was wet and torn, but he saw it was quite unlike a beggar's. Seeming to squat into an attitude of repose, he began: "Who are you, and why—" but the burgher cut his questions short:

"If the brat is hungry, tell her to follow us. It rains: I care not to soak here. Go on!"

Jacob motioned to the child to follow, and she pattered along at his side, answering his many questions. Antwerp was full of beggars. It had been so for years, and would be so for years to come, but the people's hearts were not hardened toward them. The rich citizen who one day gathered his family about his well-filled table reflected that his neighbor lay dead on the

battle-field or languished in prison, while his children were stripped of all they had. He knew that a twelvemonth later his family might be in the same plight, and the reflection made him merciful.

“Master,” exclaimed Jacob, “knew you ever in Antwerp merchants by the name of Volmar?”

“Ay: ’twas a great house, burned when the Spanish sacked the city eight years ago.”

“And might there have been a son Ludwig?”

“The only son—but no, there was one Andreas in Rotterdam.”

“Heard you that this Ludwig is dead three months gone? He was an officer in King Philip’s army that is now outside Antwerp.”

“I have heard only too much of him. Old Herr Volmar was a Romanist, ’tis true, but he was a loyal citizen and loved the Netherlands. The traitor son is well dead: he left no son.”

The dwarf halted a minute to turn the torch-light full in the child’s face, and remarked, “I thought that little mud-birds never had feathers like this one, bedraggled as it is. Can you believe ’tis the Volmar heiress? That is the story just told me. I doubt not the stomach is empty, only I noted first that the gown worn

over it was never a beggar's own ;" and Jacob seemed highly pleased at his discernment.

A gruff "Humph!" was the burgher's comment. Its import was so uncertain that the girl turned her face suddenly toward him, and a rougher word was stopped on his lips. Soft yellow hair curled around that most sweet and innocent face, while deep hollows under the blue eyes gave her a touching expression of suffering. She was at least ten years old, and so able to reason as well as to suffer.

"Ah, well, little one, hunger is soon cured with the right medicine. Here is the home-door close at hand," said Van Schendel kindly.

In a moment or two more he had flung open a door, Jacob and the torch disappeared down a side passage, while the child was introduced into a scene of comfort most welcome, but not at all unfamiliar. A large room was cheerful with the light of big candles in branching brass candlesticks and the red glow of a fire under the huge, curiously tiled mantelpiece. All the furniture was dark and heavy, but the glancing firelight played over silver tankards, quaint mugs and jugs of beautiful china, or brightened up corners where stood handsome carved-wood

chests. In the middle of the room was a table spread for supper, while the warm air was fragrant with the odor of frying sausages and waffles, without which life would have been less comfortable for one prominent member of the Antwerp Peace Council.

"The father comes! Dish up the supper now, Dorothy," shouted the clear young voice of Hubert, the son and heir. He thrust away the sleek cat with which he was playing, and, springing erect, showed himself a handsome lad of sixteen with his father's fair skin, but darker eyes and fine cut features. His title to even more beauty was made clear just then by the entrance of his mother. Vrouw Van Schendel wore a ponderous head-dress, a wide ruff, and an ample stomacher, yet the most peculiar dress could not hide her comeliness. She seemed about forty, with a serene blonde loveliness, and that almost insipidly sweet expression we see in some old Dutch portraits. When she spoke, her brown eyes kindled, all the insipidity vanished, but the sweetness stayed.

"'Tis a dark night, and very chill for the season," she said, pulling a big oak chair to the table at the place nearest the fire and giving

orders to a rosy maid to set the food on the board. It was then that she discovered the child, who had been hidden behind her portly spouse, and a few words sufficed to explain her presence. The vrouw, looking kindly on her, bade her sit in a warm nook by the chimney. When Jacob and Dorothy had set a crowd of dishes before the master, the lady filled a trencher with appetizing food and put it in the little girl's lap; then, seating herself, she bowed her head while her husband asked a long blessing. The child crossed herself and fell to admiring the fine gold ornaments fastening the vrouw's lace head-dress, not offering to appease her hunger until the prayer was ended.

"She has decent manners," said Hubert to his mother, noticing how daintily she handled the bits of meat with her thin little fingers; then they quite forgot her in talking of the day's events.

A few weeks before our story opens, the Prince of Orange had been foully murdered at Delft. He had been the controlling head, the master-mind of the Netherlands, and there was no man able to fill his place, none to whom the people would listen as to him, their "beloved father."

Fortunately, all his subjects were united in the desire for religious liberty, as all were agreed in their hatred of Spain. Antwerp at this time was nominally governed by a burgomaster at the head of a general council of magistrates. This general council was made up of various boards or "colleges," all arrogating more or less authority, all wrangling among themselves, all strangely blind to many menacing dangers. Within Antwerp was insubordination; without was the Spanish army. There was a burgher militia, brave but indocile; there were councilors, supposed to be wiser than Solomon; there were citizens like Van Schendel, brave as lions, obstinate as mules, ready to fight, ready to die, but never ready to yield an inch if conscience were at stake.

We might add that, being by nature extremely belligerent in public matters, Van Schendel had been put on the Peace Council.

"What came uppermost in the council this morning, father?" asked Hubert; "and was there talk of this wonderful bridge that they tell us the duke of Parma will build?"

"Yes," replied his father, "and the most say he will build it from the cobwebs in his brain."

"What think you, Heinrich?" asked his wife.

"That it were well for us to have taken our good prince's counsel and pierced the big dykes. Once let the sea roll in to the ports of Antwerp, and we could never be cut off from supplies from Zeeland and Holland."

"I did but speak of piercing the Blau-garen to Vrouw Shelfhaut, the butcher's wife, to-day," said Vrouw Van Schendel, "and she was like to go mad. She shouted that for a city threatened with a siege to submerge good pasture-land and drown twelve thousand oxen was as wicked a deed as Duke Alva himself ever planned."

"So say the many."

"Well, in truth, Heinrich, it does seem woeful to make more desolate our own lands, spoil our own farms, and do Spain's work of destruction for her," said his wife.

"Better, you think, then, to let the Spaniards bridge the Scheldt, cut off provisions, and trap us like rats?"

"But, father, my tutor told me to-day that the College of Fortification declare the bridge a fool's dream. They say that when Antwerp was held by the Spanish, our prince himself tried to close

the river with sunken piles, rafts, and such contrivances, but the first icebergs swept all away."

"The Spaniards plan no such bridge, if tales we hear be true. Seigneur de Kowenstyn declared for piercing the Kowenstyn dyke, and surely he spoke in no haste, for his own castle and manor are close by to suffer. So angry was he, I hear, he will go over to the Spaniards because none heeded him: men say he has so gone already."

"'Tis commonly said that this Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma, is not the devil, as was Duke Alva," remarked the vrouw, after a time of meditation over the possibilities of the future.

"Perhaps not the devil himself, but, being a Spaniard, surely the devil's own brother," returned the good man of the house, taking a mighty draught of beer from the great mug at his right hand.

"But he hath been not wholly unmerciful after his victories, as was Alva. I would I knew," she sighed, "if Antwerp will be a city besieged before another summer."

"Oh, 'tis impossible," remarked Hubert with the assurance of sixteen years' experience,—"'tis impossible to harm Antwerp. To-day the price

of corn is four times as high here as in Holland and Zeeland. While corn is plenty there, what can hinder the fly-boats coming with their cargoes? The dare-devil Zeelanders fear none of these foreign pikemen. 'Tis rare sport to see them rush their boats under the enemy's nose every day of the week, or so I hear."

With talk like this the meal progressed—a hearty meal, during whose course Dorothy more than once refilled the dishes set before the master. The Dutch were a nation of bold talkers, hard fighters, and mighty eaters. Herr Van Schendel was a typical Dutchman. At last, with a sigh of content, he pushed around his chair toward the fire while the table was cleared, only leaving a panier of cakes and a supply of beer wherewith to refresh any friend who might come in for a chat. The vrouw stepped briskly about the room, putting away articles of silver and a dish or two that Dorothy might not handle.

Hubert wandered to the window, apparently looking across the darkness to the lights hung out by the neighbors' doors, but really he saw nothing, and did not even heed the sweet ringing of the near cathedral chimes. He was

pondering how best to get leave to make a certain excursion on the morrow, even wondering if it might not be wiser to go without permission. Hubert was not wayward, but if his mother said "No" (because she could not realize that he, being sixteen, was almost a man), his father might say "No" also, merely echoing the mother. It occurred to him to speak to his father while his mother's head was bent over her linen-chest. She never went to that receptacle without getting completely absorbed in inspecting the beautiful products of Netherland skill which filled it. So, patiently waiting until he saw her studying something, perhaps a tiny stain, perhaps a broken thread, he approached the fire, quietly remarking, "Father, Jacob is most anxious to visit his old mother on the morrow, and begged me ask if he might be let go for the day."

"Pray, my boy, how long since Jacob lost the use of that tongue of his and must needs borrow yours?" asked the burgher, with a keen glance at the handsome lad by his elbow.

Hubert blushed like a girl with the sense that he was less than direct in his method; then he honestly avowed: "I offered to ask permission

for him because, father, I wish, beyond all things, to go to Kalloo with him."

Herr Van Schendel studied the lad with but half-concealed amusement, then said: "Last week a craft fell into the Spaniards' hands, and every man in the boat had his ears chopped off. Yours are full long, but I never heard of a donkey being bettered by losing those he had;" and the burgher laughed at his rather heavy pleasantry.

"Truly, and, as all tell me I am the image of my father, I would not willingly have that image marred," mischievously returned Hubert; adding, "The craft was no doubt a boat from Zeeland with provisions. What would Spaniards want of a small row-boat with a dwarf and a boy like me?"

"But your lessons and the mother?" suggested the burgher.

"I am in advance of the other boys, and, father, is there not danger I shall be a milk-sop if I be kept ever with a pedagogue and a woman, be the one never so learned and the other an angel like mother? Think of Maurice, the son of our dead prince. He is but seventeen, and will be put at the head of the State

Council of the Union, they say, and some day he will be a soldier as well."

"Verily, as he studied in Leyden, are you studying now in Antwerp. Your father is no prince, but, by my faith, if I thought my son would be a milksop, I would want to drown him for a sick kitten."

Hubert had touched the right string. He calmly replied: "I should like for my own the young prince's motto: 'The twig will yet become the tree;' and 'tis according to nature that it be of the same wood as the parent tree. I ask to be of no better than goes to my father's make-up."

"Out with the boy! Calling the father first a donkey and now wooden-headed. Go to Kalloo if you must, and keep your eyes well open. I have a curiosity to know what goes on there now-a-days."

Well pleased, Hubert ceased speaking as the sweet-faced mother came near to sit by them with a dainty task of lace-making. Meanwhile the little waif in the chimney-corner had for the first time that chill, dark day felt a delicious consciousness of physical well-being. Her cold feet were almost in the glowing ashes. The

warm blood tingled in her hands, and oh, how good was the savory meat! how sweet the mug of milk and the seed-cakes! It was not, however, strange or unreal to the child. Indeed, when a sensation of drowsiness stole over her as the last morsel was eaten and she was warm through and through, more unreal and dream-like was her recollection of the outer cold and misery. She seemed a part of her present surroundings. She had played in a room as bright as this one. She had drunk from a silver cup of her own. Was the dismal street and the queer creature with a flaming torch all a dream, or did listening to this bright-faced boy talking with his father about a boat cause her to dream that she drifted away herself between banks covered with spring flowers, in a little bark full of gay playmates? The sky was very blue, the sun shone, life was beautiful in this child's paradise.

Every one had been silent for a time. Herbert had gone to find Jacob, to tell him of his success with his father. The burgher was musing on the arguments and theories of the city magistrates, when he was startled by a faint sob. Looking quickly toward his wife, he was aston-

ished to see tears overflowing her eyes and coursing down her usually serene face.

“Louisa! my Louisa!” he exclaimed, “what is it? Have some evil tidings come that you keep from me?”

She shook her head, swallowing another sob, and, dropping her work, pointed to the chimney. Van Schendel turned in surprise, changing at once to grieved comprehension. The child leaned back against the stone. The fair tumbled hair fell away from her delicate face, flushed now with heat and slumber. Her breath came softly through her parted lips, and nothing could be prettier than the picture she made with her small hands clasped across her breast.

“Ach! our little Elizabeth! Ach! ach! how like to her!”

Grief gave his voice such a gruff intensity it awoke the little maid, who sat gazing motionless at them, her eyes full of a misty and tranquil wonder.

Van Schendel, reaching out, drew her impulsively within the circle of his strong arms and stroked her soft hair, thinking longingly of their little daughter, gone out of the home three

months before. Vrouw Van Schendel came near for a closer scrutiny of this child's face; then for the first time noticed, as Jacob had, the texture of her clothing and remarked on it to her husband. He, recalling the dwarf's words, began to question the little girl. She told them her story very clearly, in the manner of a child well taught and used always to trustful intercourse with such people as she now found herself among. Until two months before she had never been a day from her mother. Her father, belonging to a company of Netherland soldiers loyal to Spain, had been killed in a recent skirmish. His wife and Sophie (for this was her name) were living in a little town of Flanders near which the father was for a time stationed when his death left them utterly destitute. This fact Van Schendel readily understood, for the duke of Parma, himself generous and considerate of his army, was totally unable to wring from King Philip anything like money enough to support the men fighting for the Spanish crown. The common soldiers were half-starved; the officers (unless Spaniards of high rank) fared almost as poorly. In happier days Volmar had a brother in Antwerp, a

prosperous man ; so to Antwerp the widow made her way with much difficulty, for those were troublous times in which to go even a few days' journey. Arriving in the city, she found that her brother-in-law had died, and his heirs had gone no one knew where. Grief and disappointment soon wore her out. She died in a temporary refuge without knowing what was to become of her child. Volmar had been a papist, but his wife was suspected of heresy. In her last hours she refused the services of a priest, and her child was turned out of the convent in which she had found shelter. Convents were not getting richer in those days, and were overcrowded with the families of those who were or had been zealous for the Church. Sophie was told to go to her Protestant friends. She knew of none, and Antwerp was full of women and children begging bread which they once had in abundance. Sophie's story was entirely credible, and as she told it so simply, leaning against Van Schendel's broad breast, both the strong man and the pitiful woman looked at her with the same thought: "What if we had died, and our Elizabeth, so fair and tender, had been turned into Antwerp's streets?"

A gust of wind and rain shook the casement as they looked at Sophie and remembered Elizabeth in her safe little grave.

Van Schendel spoke first, and hesitatingly. Even out of compassion for the waif he would not hurt his idolized Louisa, for, "son of thunder" as he was often called, he was very tender to her, and it might seem cruel, this suggestion of another in 'Lizabeth's place: "While we had our own there was a soft bed and food to spare; there is no less in the house now, Louisa. If she has come here for daily bread, this friendless Sophie, the Father in heaven may not mean us to turn her away to hunger hereafter."

There was pain along with the pity in Vrouw Van Schendel's face, and after a minute she answered: "Dorothy will marry some day. The servant one trains early and long is ever the best in the house."

"Little maid," said the burgher, standing her on her feet, "if we tell you to bide here until summer comes and the sun shines again all day in Antwerp, will you obey your mistress yonder?"

"I may stay until morning?" asked Sophie a little puzzled, and when the good-natured giant

nodded, she was sure whatever he might mean it was something comfortable and kindly like his face. She was not so much at ease with the tearful, beautiful woman who had looked coldly at her a moment before, but, dropping the quaintest of courtesies, she half kneeled and kissed Vrouw Van Schendel's hand.

An hour later the lady led her up stairs to a shadowy room whose wooden ceiling was like the under side of a flight of stairs, and whose furniture was, so Sophie thought, as grand and solemn as if it came from a church. Off this was a smaller room, more like one the child remembered. Dorothy came then with water to bathe the child, and Vrouw Van Schendel took from a chest clean old garments once belonging to 'Lizabeth, and clad Sophie in some of them, laying others ready for the morning. She was about to ask the child if she knew a prayer, when, untold, Sophie knelt on the cold wood floor and uttered the same words Vrouw Van Schendel had heard so often and missed of late. Unbidden, then she crept into bed as if it were hers by right. Her eyelids were scarcely able to lift themselves over the sleepy eyes. Vrouw Van Schendel lingered, her heart soft with sor-

row, loneliness and pity—for this child only the pity. Still, after a moment she bent suddenly and kissed her, because she said within herself, “A child’s dreamland may touch heaven; if the angel of her mother comes to her, who knows but she could carry a caress to my little one?”

So was Sophie left to peaceful sleep, to dreams of no being more celestial than the sallow hunchback with his unsteady torch, but realities were enough. Jacob had led her into a heaven for her quite complete.

When Herr Van Schendel was left to his fireside meditations they soon became profound, and by no means cheerful. For the first time he had become convinced that day that the safety of Antwerp lay in doing what the burgo-master urged upon the people as the policy recommended by their former ruler, the Prince of Orange. This policy was the piercing of the great dykes, so making the city easily accessible by ships from the Northern Ocean. Failing to do this (and there was vehement opposition to the scheme), there would be little hope for Antwerp if the prince of Parma carried out his project. This project was declared by half the

people of Antwerp the wildest and most impracticable that brain of man could devise. It was to throw a bridge across the Scheldt near Antwerp, first having secured all forts above and below on the river. Antwerp, cut off then from supplies, must succumb. All day Van Schendel had striven to show how wise it was to render impossible the Spaniard's plan, and all day he had heard nothing but indignation at mention of flooding pasture-lands, destroying cattle and bringing more desolation on the land. No wonder that when at last he went to bed it was to troubled dreams, and that next morning he was for a moment puzzled to account for the merry laugh of a child.

Sophie was up betimes and playing with the family cat. She was a very different little body from the woe-begone child of the night before, and Hubert was much attracted by her when she appeared in the dining-room, which was bright with the first sunshine of a pleasant autumn day. Warmth, food and rest seemed to have filled out the dark hollows under her eyes.

She was extremely pretty and a fearless, happy little girl, not bold, but sincere herself and trustful with others. She came at once to

Van Schendel's arm-chair and smiled her morning greeting, as if quite sure of a friendly reception. She tripped about after Vrouw Van Schendel, taking the liveliest interest in all her motions. While in serene unconsciousness that her place in the house was to be that of a servant, she patronized Dorothy as naturally as if she herself were the heiress to some vast estate. Dorothy took all in good part, and confided to Jacob her belief that the child would rule the house before Easter.

Several rather queer things came up in Dorothy's domain that morning. Jacob ate such a breakfast that when the rosy maid had fetched him a third supply from the larder she remarked, "Well, for one of your size, Jacob, you can do wonders once let a meal-time come; but perhaps you hold a fast for your sins to-morrow?"

"Not unless the Spaniards appoint my fast and make me keep it. 'Tis this way, Dolly: they tell me we shall be all starving in Antwerp some day, and I may want just such a breakfast as this if I should be fool enough now to neglect it."

"But will you have it any more then for eating it now?"

"Maybe not, but I'll not have it heavy on my conscience that I left anything undone that I could have done as well as not," replied Jacob calmly, producing a leather pouch and stowing away in it full as much as he had already eaten.

There was moreover wrath in Dorothy's honest soul when at the sound of Vrouw Van Schendel's approaching footsteps he pushed it quickly under the table. She was about to upbraid him for both gluttony and theft when Hubert appeared laughing in the door behind his mother. He had evidently some understanding with Jacob, for he first showed and then hid a pouch like Jacob's, and one apparently as well filled. When Dorothy was next alone with Jacob he naughtily played on her simplicity, hinting that Hubert was about to run away to join King Philip's army, and that he himself was going as his aid-de-camp; also that the Catholics in Antwerp would slay her if she revealed the matter. Next he took all back, and teased her with the tale of a wife he had wed in Kalloo, and who had sent him word she was famishing. In the midst of his mischief came a call to prayers, for this was a Calvinistic household, and Herr Van Schendel would have read

the Bible and prayed with his family though he were sure of being drawn and quartered when discovered in so doing. Fortunately, liberty of conscience was not then disallowed in Antwerp. Streams of blood and the death of thousands of martyrs had secured it in part to certain provinces.

Opening the big volume, Herr Van Schendel read impressively a chapter from the Epistles, and then all kneeled while he prayed long and loudly for himself, his family, the stranger within their gates, for his country, and the preservation of its rights. Toward the end of his petition he grew almost warlike in tone as he asked for the utter annihilation of the enemy and the overthrow of popery; but this was an age in which earnest men could not be lukewarm. Good was grappling with evil in too close a struggle; sometimes the mantle of charity was thrown aside as an encumbrance in the conflict. Men hated sinners along with what they considered the sin.

It was not always easy to Louisa Van Schendel to concur with all that her husband uttered in his prayers. She was less vehement, and perhaps more thoughtful, than he. She had

been brought up in a convent, and loved many things connected with her early life in "the Church." Van Schendel had been an irreligious youth who had given no heed to Calvin, Luther or the pope's doctrine until the issues of the war had made him a thinker. As the days went by his thoughts crystallized into beliefs.

It is not unlikely that Hubert and Jacob were inattentive to their devotions, for almost before the mother was off her knees both son and servant had vanished from the room. They hurried to the street, getting themselves well out of reach as soon as possible, for Hubert feared his father might revoke the permission given the night before. It was a more hazardous thing than Van Schendel had realized, this letting his son go where he might suffer indignity or run into actual danger. Kalloo was now the headquarters of the prince of Parma. One half his army of ten thousand foot and seventeen hundred horse lay with him close by the village on the left bank of the river, nearly opposite Antwerp. On the right bank, ten miles below, was Count Mansfeld with the rest of his force. But if the burgher was somewhat careless, Jacob was not foolhardy. Before start-

ing away in the little rowboat, he made Hubert change his outer garments in the shop of a friendly tailor well known to them, and put on the rough garb of a workman. It was not Hubert's first visit to Kalloo. He knew it in the past as a tiny, placid hamlet with green pastures all about. He had seen the inside of almost all its thatched cottages, had played about its windmills, learned the age of its storks' nests, and had been with Jacob's fat old mother to the little church behind the poplar trees.

Jacob had purposely chosen as miserable-looking a little craft as could be well kept afloat, and as they carried no cargo they need excite no suspicion nor even attract attention. The sun shone through a pale amber haze, the wind was soft and warm, and Hubert wanted to sing, to shout, and to enjoy himself boy-fashion, but Jacob insisted that he must act like a dull lout. As workmen they would escape notice in all probability, for in Kalloo were hundreds of carpenters, joiners, blacksmiths, and workmen of every sort, with bakers, brewers and butchers from Brabant and Flanders,—all hard at work the day through.

When they approached the place once

familiar to Hubert he was amazed at the changes that had taken place. The whole aspect of nature had altered. The people would not follow the advice of William of Orange in regard to piercing the great dykes, but they had opened sluices on the Flemish side—a measure that in the end proved of no good to them and gave great advantage to the enemy. Where once had been cottages and castles, fine farms and lofty trees, now stretched out a vast plain of water, above which rose the turrets of castles and the tops of trees; all else on that side had disappeared—all the villages for miles around. Kalloo was high and dry, or so Jacob insisted, but Hubert could only gaze toward it in astonishment. The quiet little hamlet had become a vast workshop, factory and dockyard. On the Flemish side, near Kalloo, was a strong fort called “St. Mary.” On the opposite side of the river was another, named “Philip” for the king of Spain. From these two points a framework of heavy timber was being carried out over the water on huge piles.

“See, now!” cried Jacob; “that is the beginning of the bridge that Antwerp folks tell us can never be finished.”

"And I think they may be right, too. Why, the ice will sweep it all away when once comes the time of icebergs and tempests. Before that some other means will be found to destroy it, no doubt. Faith, I scarce believed it well begun. But however can you tell where to find your father's house, Jacob?"

"Never you fear my missing it. We will get to shore down there by that raft of timber, and we must seem to have a hand in some work around about. There are so many gangs of men that each man will think we belong to another gang than his, if you only remember to use your eyes and not your tongue. It is no harm if any make talk with *me*, for in these days my father saves his neck and fills his stomach by hauling wood for the bridge."

"I thought all your family were loyal to our prince's memory and hated the Spaniards? You told me as much only yesterday."

"And it was the whitest of truths, but my father says (and so say I), 'Why not work for the devil himself, so you fatten at his expense, while wiser folks than you are sure his devilish work is all for naught and nobody to be the worse for it?'" replied Jacob with a grin.

There seemed something amiss, or at best an absence of patriotism, about this logic; but Hubert became too much interested in the sights about him to be argumentative. After landing without attracting any attention, they were some time choosing a place to leave their boat where they would be sure to find it again; but this they finally accomplished. Then, guided by the distant church-spire, Jacob made his way to the cottage where he first saw the light. As they passed the church they found it the very centre of all the activity, the main workshop in fact.

Boys of sixteen are not sentimental, but when Hubert recalled the June days he had spent in Kalloo, finding then its quiet only broken by such soft country sounds as the lowing of sleek cattle in the lush pastures or the song of birds and the voices of children at play, he found the present discords anything but pleasing. Everywhere were companies of busy workmen, groups of foreign soldiers, noisy and brawling, while in place of the tiny old footpaths bordered with wild flowers was trodden ground rank with filth.

Jacob, keeping well in advance, led the way to the cottage. That too, they were to find, had

suffered a change for the worse. The simple home-life had become merely a question of safe existence shorn of all rustic pleasures. Vrouw Kiesling, who used to give young Hubert the heartiest of welcomes, looked up from her bread-mixing as they darkened her doorway, and stifled a cry on her lips. Before she gave them any greeting whatever she glanced through the small window and out of the door. Then she whispered, "You risk too much, Jacob, when you bring your young master here."

"Not so, I think—not so, mother; and how goes you it with you in these days?"

"Badly—worse and worse for a decent body liking peace and always having had it. I cook for a dozen or more workmen from Ghent and Dendermonde. They pay me when they have aught to pay with, but it is little they get for their work, though I hear it said their pay is far better and more sure than the soldiers are having from the Spaniards. They get nothing but fine promises."

"Which never fattened anybody either for war or peace. Well, sorry I am, old mother, to see you getting thinner yourself. I hoped you were thriving."

She shook her head in a doleful way, and soon after Hubert detected Jacob in the act of emptying his pouch (which held what was to have been his dinner) into a chest beside the poor woman. He instantly followed his example, although Jacob tried to push him aside, saying, "You must not. I ate enough for all day, but you will famish."

Vrouw Kiesling interposed, thrust back into Hubert's pouch a part of the food he had contributed, and thanked him with tears coming suddenly into her honest eyes. It was the first charity she had received in all her hard-working life. Hubert saw the muscles of her shrewd, kindly face work with emotion. She was the next moment as unmoved as ever, but she eagerly questioned them about public opinion in Antwerp. Though only an ignorant peasant, she had good sense and reflected on whatever she heard. Every day she listened to talk among the workmen, and through their talk filtered the opinions of those who were superintending the bridge.

"What ails you of Antwerp?" she asked. "Tell your father, Master Hubert, that men here say 'tis easy to see the Prince of Orange is dead

when you let the Spaniards build yonder bridge under your very noses."

"Why, my honest woman," said Hubert with the patronizing good-humor peculiar to youth, "let them build. It keeps them from worse mischief. Antwerp fears nothing of that sort. If we were besieged, wheat is coming in from Holland very fast. My father thinks we could easily victual the city for a year. The skippers from Flushing like no better fun now-a-days than to bring us wheat, rye, beef and butter."

"'Tis fun these Spaniards vow they will soon stop," whispered Vrouw Kiesling, glancing over her shoulder, as if afraid of the sound of her own voice.

"Where is my father?" asked Jacob, and he was told where he could find the old man at work; so, after a little longer talk, they left the cabin. Vrouw Kiesling urged them to satisfy their curiosity as soon as might be and get back to Antwerp.

They laughed at her fears. Jacob saw no reason in them, and Hubert—well, Hubert had sagely reasoned out and explained to himself the whole state of affairs long ere this. There might, he thought, be more fighting, but then

times had changed even within his recollection. Eight years ago Alva, that fiend incarnate, was at the head of the Spanish forces. Hubert, then a boy of eight, well remembered the Spanish Fury, as it was called, in Antwerp. It was a horrible nightmare in his memory. What worse could there be outside of hell itself? What a scene of fire, blood, plunder, murder and cruelties, such as it had never entered into men's hearts to imagine possible! But *now*, after eight years, was not Antwerp out from under the Spanish yoke? Had not Spain learned a lesson? Alva had gone to his own place (no Calvinist but could tell where that was), and Parma, his successor, was far more enlightened. He was not bloodthirsty, even if he was a Spaniard. He would probably see the folly of his undertaking and abandon the whole enterprise. At least this had been Hubert immature philosophy before seeing Kalloo workmen. Just now, as he followed Jacob here and there, using his eyes according to his father's advice, he indulged in some new reflections. He did not mean to be in any way imprudent, but as the day went by he grew more and more interested in all these warlike activities. He asked several rather

unguarded questions of various persons in respect to certain engineering matters that seemed to him novel and interesting. Who would heed him in that anthill of busy workers?

About the middle of the afternoon Jacob said, "There is a fellow who is watching us much too sharply. You hasten and lose yourself in a crowd, and we will meet at the boat. 'Tis time we were off."

Hubert instantly realized that he himself had been aware of this person's scrutiny. He knew Jacob meant a young man with fine dark eyes and olive skin. He resisted the impulse to look again to see if he might be in sight, but he recalled his intent gaze. Acting on Jacob's suggestion, he started toward a gang of laborers, but a moment later was hindered by some one who blocked his way long enough to whisper, "I go to *warn* the dwarf; rejoin him soon and heed what I tell him. You are from Antwerp! *Trust me.*"

Hubert stared in silent astonishment, then caught a significant glance from the stranger's clear eye as he suddenly and loudly reproached him for his clumsiness in blocking the narrow thoroughfare. Next Hubert, keeping covert

watch of Jacob, saw the young man approach and speak with the dwarf. Then he saw them separate, meet and again separate as if by chance, but evidently in order not to be seen talking too long together. Finally, the stranger turned down a narrow lane between temporary shops, while Jacob, coming close to Hubert, whispered quickly, "Yonder fellow is a Huguenot and hates the Spaniards. He is here as an engineer by a chance he cannot explain. He says a soldier once a servant at the castle of Kowenstyn has seen and reported you as the son of an Antwerp magistrate, and it begins to be whispered that you are sent as a spy. They now look for you along the shore. Alack! how can we tell if his word and his advice is to be trusted?"

"What advises he, Jacob?"

"That you let him hide you until the darkness comes. He says none yet know we are together or just how you came, but going now by boat you will of a surety be caught."

"Who knows but he traps me?" queried Hubert, more perplexed than frightened, for the boy had courage. "Think you, Jacob, that he has a good face?"

"Ay, an honest one, it seems to me, and the Huguenots are Protestants," muttered Jacob, greatly troubled.

"If he be a Huguenot and not a lying Spaniard. What spoke he?"

"Poor Dutch," replied Jacob.

Half a dozen carpenters bearing a heavy beam shouted for the right of way. At that instant the stranger again appeared and spoke, this time peremptorily: "Follow me at once if you value your liberty. There are soldiers seeking you now."

"Go! go!" entreated Jacob with more emotion in face and voice than Hubert dreamed him capable of showing.

Half doubting his guide and wholly reluctant to follow, yet not venturing to disobey something in his tone that indicated sincerity, Hubert let Jacob go without protest. He stood for a second trying to decide what to do, then yielded to an impetuous "Come! come!" and followed the young man in and out, here, there, wherever the confusion was greatest. So at last they came where there was a vast accumulation of building materials, but few workmen. The stranger went toward a little hut, once the home

of Kalloo peasants, now used to shelter tools from the weather. Looking about to make sure no one noticed them, he opened the door and motioned Hubert in; then, standing on the threshold, he said, "I am sure no one has tracked us, and if not you are securely hidden until dark; after that nothing hinders your escape."

"Why think you I should be molested were I to take the boat now?" asked Hubert, standing in the dim light of the hut and scanning his companion from head to foot as he awaited an answer. Before the answer came Hubert felt an increase of confidence in his companion. There was a frank kindliness in his handsome face and a ring of sincerity in his voice:

"Sit you behind that pile of rubbish, and none passing the door can see you. Through the chinks in the wall you can see if any come from behind near enough to hear our voices. It is not safe for you to go, because only a half hour ago word was sent Richebourg, the lieutenant of the prince of Parma, that a young spy was wandering about among the workmen, and that he had been recognized as the son of an Antwerp magistrate."

"Yes, old Casper Heideck it was, I have no doubt, who betrayed me. He belongs to that traitor Kowenstyn, and followed the seigneur over to the enemy."

"Softly, softly, my boy! Am *I* not in the enemy's ranks?"

"In them, but not of them, I think."

"No, fortunately for you, I am not, but are you a spy? If so, I cannot commend the wisdom of those who sent you. The first glance I gave you I knew of a certainty that you masqueraded in those old clothes. You have no look of an apprentice about you. Then, as if your disguise were not clumsy enough, you must needs fetch along that dwarf, who is as conspicuous as a court fool."

A little piqued, Hubert hastened to give an account of himself. When he had ended, the young man told him that he was a Huguenot who possessed a considerable knowledge of engineering. Finding himself a few months previously where an avowal of his sentiments would have caused his immediate undoing, he had simply kept silent. By a curious misunderstanding he was supposed to be an Italian, and of course loyal to the king of Spain. He had spent

several years of his boyhood in Mantua and spoke Italian readily. Being caught in a trap, he resolved to offer his services to the Marquise Richebourg as an engineer until he could make good his escape. Naturally, he had thought only of getting again to his friends in France, but as he talked more and more confidentially with Hubert, the idea occurred to both that he would do well to go back with the boat to Antwerp in the company of Hubert and Jacob. He would be no nearer France, but he would be with Protestants. Before an hour had passed Hubert seemed to have known Louis Raymond long and intimately. He was nine years older than the boy, but there was about him a gayety of humor, with a dash of recklessness, very fascinating to one younger. At the same time, in his talk about the state of affairs, both in the Netherlands and all over Europe, he showed an amount of knowledge far beyond the boy's understanding. For this reason, perhaps, the conversation after a while drifted from general topics to more personal details. Hubert learned that the Raymonds were a good old French family, of no pretensions to nobility, but for generations people of importance in their pro-

vincial town. Through the fortunes of successive struggles for religious freedom their estates had dwindled, and now there remained only one country-seat, not far from Nonancourt. There, in the utmost seclusion, lived Raymond's mother, his sister and an aunt. In these times of turmoil the ability to live out of sight and heed of the multitude was much to be desired.

The afternoon passed rapidly in an exchange of mutual confidences. About dark Raymond went out for a half hour, and, returning, said, "'Tis reported that you made your escape in a little boat, and were taken on board a craft from Zeeland. So far, so good. The night is very dark. I have seen the dwarf; he awaits us not far away. I go forth in a moment and follow him; you must come just after, so we will reach the boat, and pray God we get to Antwerp before the dawn!"

"By midnight at the latest, or I pity my father," said Hubert.

"And not the mother?"

"'Tis because of her I pity him; but come, what hinders us from starting?"

"We go this moment; lose not sight of me or

you go astray, for I follow Jacob. We must go near enough to touch one another, but it is safest to hold no speech as we go." So saying, young Raymond shut the hovel-door behind them.

CHAPTER II.

IN ANTWERP.

THERE was indeed great dismay in the Van Schendel household when evening came and the burgher was forced to confess having let Hubert go to Kalloo with Jacob. After her first words of chiding Vrouw Van Schendel did not continue to upbraid him, but her increasing pallor made him very penitent. When Dorothy saw him leave his food almost uneaten after a show of perfect confidence in the truant's safety, she was so greatly concerned that she regretted occasions when she had disciplined Jacob, or tried to with small success. She enticed Sophie into the kitchen to amuse her, and watched every footstep past the door. It was Dorothy who sent the little girl to bed, for poor Vrouw Van Schendel had forgotten her existence. The goodman of the house, remembering one lost child, prayed that the last, the only one, might not be taken from them, and through his care-

lessness. A neighbor called, and they talked of everything but what was in their hearts. They prolonged the evening prayers, and made much of every household trifle; but what no one thought of doing was going to bed. Dorothy gave most comfort by insisting as the hours went by, on cooking a second most savory meal, declaring the lads would be starving when they came. As the great clumsy clock in the corner struck one, poor Vrouw Van Schendel burst into tears, crying, "Oh, Heinrich! what can have happened to my boy? Why did you let him run into danger?"

The burgher had not time to speak before hurried footsteps and laughing voices—one so welcome—broke the gloomy silence. The door flew open, and in came Hubert, still clad in his rough disguise, and Raymond, manly, attractive, but just then a little shy, while as a background was the broad dwarf grinning complacently.

"My Hubert, how thou hast frightened me!"

"And right sorry I am, my mother," he exclaimed, kissing her with boyish ardor before he turned, saying, "I might not have come back to you at all but for the good will of a new

friend. Let me present to you, mother and father, Louis Raymond, a Huguenot entrapped by the Spaniards. I think I have not erred in promising this Protestant and a hater of King Philip a welcome."

Van Schendel approached to give the stranger keen scrutiny in the light of a hanging lamp. He liked his face, and cordially responded: "Promise any good Christian, any lover of the Netherlands, a welcome to Antwerp and another to our home."

"Christian am I, though not as good an one as I might be, and a hearty well-wisher for Antwerp's freedom from Spain," returned Raymond, bowing low to Vrouw Van Schendel.

"And you, Jacob!" cried the burgher in his bluff manner, just noting the dwarf's grins, "what think *you* of the Spanish army?"

"I think, master, 'tis ugly enough as a whole, but, take it man by man, I have not seen leaner, hungrier-looking scarecrows since I was born. If needs be, we must fight the souls of them out of those bodies into purgatory, but by my own empty stomach I could pity theirs. I will have them in mind come eating-time once more."

"Don't bring famine on Antwerp before ever

we are besieged," laughed the burgher, adding, "You will all have supper before bed, I think?"

"That we will, most gladly," cried Hubert, "and if my nose does not play me a trick, I smell pancakes of the sort I like best."

"What sort that is, Dorothy is not ignorant of for lack of your telling," said his mother gayly as she hastened preparations for the midnight feast.

Raymond had been given the guest's chair by the fireside, and was accounting for the day's occurrences and the late home-coming. Aware that Herr Van Schendel might not receive him in such full faith as his young son had done, he endeavored without conceit, yet with ready tact, to gain the burgher's confidence. He was conscious of deserving it, and succeeded then and later.

"Draw up to the board," urged the host when the last steaming dish had been put on the table. "I have not been to Kalloo myself, but I lost my supper all the same, or my relish for it, which is even worse."

No one needed urging. Hubert, hungry as he was, talked incessantly of what he had seen. His mother was his interested listener, while

Van Schendel conversed with the better-informed visitor. Raymond was all animation and talked well. After weeks of camp discomfort, the warmth and good cheer of a home was in its way as delightful to him as it had been to Sophie the night before. He enjoyed his converse with the burgher, he was greatly charmed by the gentle loveliness of Vrouw Van Schendel, and last, but not least, he found his supper most delicious. So excited was the little party that when at last the pleasant meal was ended the good lady was forced to send the family to bed, after showing them the face of the truthful clock, whereon they read three in the morning.

For a day or two Raymond allowed himself to be treated as a guest, but he had no idea of abusing the hospitality so freely accorded to him. His plan had been first to escape from Kalloo, and next to make his way as soon as possible to France, but before he had been a week in Antwerp he resolved to remain for a time where he was.

One evening there came to the house of his host a caller who interested Raymond from the moment he entered the door. He was physically the greatest contrast to Van Schendel,

being swarthy, alert, extremely quiet in manner, yet with eyes that nothing escaped. Raymond decided that he was not Dutch before hearing him called by name, Gianibelli, yet he was evidently a citizen of Antwerp and talked of his family as one long settled in the city. For perhaps half an hour Raymond listened in silence to the conversation, trying to guess what was the stranger's profession. He first concluded that he was an Italian scholar of remarkable attainments; then he was sure he must be a chemist, possibly an astrologer or wizard. Indeed, so visionary were some of his ideas that Raymond began to wonder if he were not a student rather crazed by over-study. After a while the conversation turned on affairs in Antwerp, and Van Schendel told him of Hubert's visit to Kalloo. When he mentioned that Raymond knew something of engineering and was able to tell much of the bridge in process of construction, Signor Gianibelli quickly turned to the young man and eagerly questioned him. Raymond was surprised to find him more profoundly versed in theoretic and practical engineering than any teacher or worker he had ever known. All that he himself knew came to the

surface, and Gianibelli's impetuous tones became a shade more respectful as Raymond answered him in detail.

"Listen ! listen !" he exclaimed to Van Schendel. "Our friend here sees what I have all along told you bats, you blind magistrates, that the bridge is as good as built—this bridge that is an '*impossibility*.' I tell you, Van Schendel, *now* is the time to be storing every magazine in Antwerp with corn—corn easy to get and easier to keep, corn that we will soon see at famine-price."

"Softly, softly, signor," said the burgher. "I am not so stupid as you think ; from breakfast-time to supper-time I have plead with townsmen and magistrates to do this thing."

"Ay, ay. Well, let them refuse to heed us and there will be small need to cease talk or aught else because of a breakfast or a supper," grunted the visitor ; and so the evening passed in conversation of this sort. When, upon asking Raymond about his studies, the older man discovered that he had spent a few years in Mantua, he was greatly pleased, for Mantua was Gianibelli's native place. He had pulled his mantle over his shoulders and risen to go when

he found that Raymond knew friends, and even relatives, from whom he had not heard "in centuries," as he declared. He lingered half an hour longer, and when going warmly pressed Raymond to visit him on the following day.

Van Schendel, who had gone to the door with him, returned to stir the fire, and exclaimed as he sank into his great chair, "'Tis a quick brain, marvelously quick! The man knows much, and that much he knows well."

"Tell me of him, I pray, for his equal I have not seen," said Raymond.

"And when you have known him a year you will say that thrice as heartily. I trust Gianibelli, though he cares no more for a Calvinist than a Catholic. I like him, though he is as indifferent to freedom for freedom's sake as the stupidest donkey in Antwerp. He went from Italy years ago to offer his services to Spain. We of Antwerp think him a genius, but they of Philip's court found him a lunatic. His patience is as small as his temper is hot. He took himself north, and vowed vengeance on the Spaniards wherever he might find them. This is Gianibelli's religion, and this also is his patriotism."

“And that being so, cannot Antwerp find work for him?”

“I think it,” said Van Schendel, studying the red coals with a thoughtful face. Somewhat later he remarked, “Were I in your place, friend, I would go visit Gianibelli on the morrow. Unless you are sore pressed to be in France, he might find good work for you to do in Antwerp. He has schemes in his head for the defense of our city in case of a siege, and others still in regard to this bridge of Parma’s. He hath oft told me that he lacked for wise helpers, meaning engineers, such as I make no doubt you yourself may be. Of late he has associated with him two skillful artisans here, Bory and Timmerman, for what purpose I know not. Bory is a clockmaker, and Timmerman a mechanician.”

“I will see him before this time to-morrow. As yet there is no place awaiting me at home. Once let me know that our Henry of Navarre hath need of Huguenot troops, and I go to serve under him, but now if I can do aught for liberty of conscience here, right glad will I be to stay in Antwerp.”

The burgher nodded approval. Hubert

glanced admiringly at Raymond's glowing, handsome face, and felt a thrill of sympathy with the sentiments that animated his breast.

Of the two new-comers, Raymond, as was natural, attracted more attention than Sophie; but little she cared so long as smiles, kind words and comfort fell to her share. The burgher petted her openly after Vrouw Van Schendel had given her certain of Elizabeth's playthings. Having gained from him a promise that she need never go away if she would "always be good," Sophie decided she had found her home for life. For Hubert she had great admiration. He was a frolicsome fellow, and would naturally have teased and romped with her, but the memory of his little dead sister, so like in some ways to Sophie, subdued him and made him not ungentle toward her. When she approached him with Elizabeth's wooden doll in her arms, he glanced about half abashed, and then kissed her. After that she followed him like a kitten whenever he was in the house. It happened that Raymond first saw her when she was singing a gay little song and dancing like a sprite for Dorothy's amusement. She did not see him in the door until he loudly applauded,

and for some reason her wee ladyship took the applause in high dudgeon. For several days she refused to receive his proffers of friendship, although his stories had great fascination for her and his merry jests kept her half vexed, half excited.

One morning he found her in the dining-room, and cried, "Come now, little spice-box, give me a kiss, and I'll tell thee of a little cousin of mine far away in France."

"Doesn't thy cousin in France want thee?" replied Sophie with a saucy gleam in her bright eyes.

"Indeed she does, as much as thou wilt once I have left thee to the company of Miss Wooden-head."

This slighting allusion to Elizabeth's ugly doll was in Sophie's opinion almost sacrilegious, and she frowned on Raymond so fiercely that with a merry laugh he caught her in his strong arms and perched her suddenly on a wall-shelf almost on a level with his head. He loved children, and had no thought of real annoyance. His grasp on her was very gentle, though firm, but he had bumped the doll unmercifully, and Sophie was too angry to

reflect that it could have been flung against a rock without injury. She scowled and sulked, kicking her little shoes vigorously against his broad chest. Had they been wooden instead of wool, she might have been a dangerous foe, but as it was he told her funny tales of France and "la petite Marie," of her pet dog and her trained donkey, at the end of each story teasing for the kiss as a token of future friendship. If Sophie had been free, she would have yielded, but the passionate little creature had become as obstinate as a whole Dutch garrison called upon to surrender without resistance. He ceased storytelling, sang her a gay song in the Romance language of the South, and, ending, asked, "Wilt thou kiss me now, my little lady on the castle-wall?"

Utterly reckless, Sophie gave a violent spring, and would have leaped to the floor, thereby surely suffering injury, had not Raymond caught her midway in his arms. He held her a second, only meaning to tell her that she need not kiss him if she really objected. She mistook his intention, and, raising her hand, struck him a rough blow directly in the face. He set her on her feet, and, looking full in her

eyes, said calmly, without the friendly "thee and thou," "You are not like Marie: she is a small lady, with soft hands that do kind things and a tongue only for pleasant words. I want nothing from *you*."

With perfect unconcern Sophie picked up the doll and went slowly kitchenward, where, seated on a bench by the fire, she fell into a profound revery.

The young Frenchman grew in favor every day with his new friends. They found him ardent and about common affairs very transparent and communicative, yet in times of excitement most self-controlled. In regard to those things that concerned him deeply he had the reserve of a truly sensitive nature. They would gladly have kept him one of their household, but after a week or two, although he decided to remain in Antwerp, he thought best to take lodgings near Gianibelli. After a few hours' consultation with that subtle thinker and practical worker, Raymond had yielded to his wishes and entered into certain of his schemes for the future defense of Antwerp. He received from Gianibelli means sufficient to supply his very modest wants, and when not engaged with his patron he was often

to be found in the home-circle of his new friends.

In the last days of his stay as a guest Vrouw Van Schendel fitted him out so bountifully with bedding, linen, dishes, candlesticks, and other comforts for the furnishing of his new apartments that really there seemed nothing lacking, as Van Schendel told him, but a "housewife." He went farther, and offered to present him to various comely damsels in the families of friends, but Raymond avowed it was not a time for "marrying or giving in marriage."

Sophie avoided him, and Raymond ignored her since their late encounter. He thought her a pretty but spoiled child. What she thought no one knew or cared; only Vrouw Van Schendel decided she was of a most fitful temper—first gay and heedless, then dull and moody. Sophie was a child with a singularly keen sense of honor. When the burgher had told her she might stay with them as long as she was "good," the contract between them seemed to her of deep significance. She had been trained to obey, had good sense, and remembered few times when she had been in disgrace; so, for a while, all had gone happily. That day, when she seated her-

self to meditate by the kitchen-fire, the first great mental struggle of her life took place. Children in the times we write of were not domestic nuisances. Little girls especially were taught to be quiet, helpful and courteous. Sophie knew that for an offense such as she had committed her own mother would have whipped her soundly. She reasoned that she ought to be whipped, but in all probability Raymond would not tell of her. An intuition told her that he had done with her when she was so scornfully dismissed. For that she did not care very much, but what began to prey on her conscience was this: she had not been good; she had broken her promise. The good Herr Van Schendel did not know it, and she herself might keep it a secret. She *must* keep it, or—oh fearful alternative!—she must go out again to cold and hunger. Her little heart seemed like to break at the thought. To walk out of this warm kitchen, bright with Dorothy's copper saucepans and Dorothy's own rosy face—to put down for ever Elizabeth's precious doll with its pink silk stomacher! Instead of good food, fresh garments and a soft little bed, to have again darkness, rain, cold streets, beggar's food! And oh—

worst of all—to leave these new friends! to have no right to nestle close to Herr Van Schendel at supper or to drop sly bits for the fat cat purring at her feet!—to get no more pats on the head from Hubert, even to miss Jacob's good-natured leers! How terrible would this going away be! But nobody need know that she had not been good—nobody. She must hide her secret.

For four days the child went about trying to forget her trouble, or rather what she felt to be her guilt, and almost succeeded. Then there came an afternoon when she went with Dorothy, who had errands to do for her mistress. It happened that they passed what had been (next to the cathedral) one of the finest Catholic churches in the city. In the time of the image-breaking throughout the provinces its beautiful carved statues in both wood and stone had suffered great injury. There were, however, still left several fine groups of saints and a few masterpieces by the Flemish painters of the times. Dorothy, urged by Sophie, entered the quiet church, and wandered about looking at the old tombs, the pictures and whatever of interest iconoclasts had left unbroken. Dorothy's taste was crude, but Sophie had a truer sense of

beauty. In a niche where once had been an altar there was a certain figure of the Saviour that greatly attracted her. It had not the haggard face and meagre form common to many similar representations of Christ. This face was sorrowful, but benignant, and something in the expression recalled to Sophie the simple teachings of her mother—exhortations to “be good” and to remember her prayers. Dorothy wandered aimlessly down aisles and into chapels, but Sophie, losing all curiosity, only realized that she had been bad, had broken a promise, and was now permitted to be Herr Van Schendel’s little guest only because she was deceiving him. Trifling as her offense seems to an older mind, it was to Sophie wrongdoing, and the desire to hide it was her first real temptation. In a grave mood she followed Dorothy home, and on entering the house slipped away from her to Vrouw Van Schendel. The good lady was in her linen-room when the little girl came in and dropped down at her feet by the side of one of those great oaken chests in which the house abounded. She smoothed Sophie’s soft hair and gave her a kind word or two before calling Dorothy by ringing

a quaint little bell that hung at her girdle. When the maid appeared she said, "Have a care that the cakes be well done this night, for Herr Raymond goeth from us, and a friend or two may be with us to do him honor ere he leaves on the morrow."

Dorothy respectfully agreed to do her best and departed. The clatter of her wooden shoes grew fainter. Jacob in some remote region could be heard singing, but all about the gentle vrouw was peace, except in poor Sophie's heart. Suddenly she flung herself face downward into the lady's lap and broke into such a passion of sobs and tears that Vrouw Van Schendel was much surprised. For a time she could only make out that Sophie "must go away! must go away!" and she imagined some friend or relative had claimed the child. The fancy grieved her, for with the soft cheeks wet with tears on her hands and the yellow head buried in her lap her motherly instincts were aroused. A little soothing, a few mild appeals, and Sophie got out her incoherent little story. She had betrayed her trust, had in staying longer with Herr Van Schendel deceived him. Vrouw Van Schendel had not much sense of humor, but she

was moved to smiles at the story of this first offence—not so at the struggle between the little one's honor and her grief at “going away.” The womanly soul understood the childish one, and then and there Vrouw Van Schendel began to love Sophie for her own sake, not for Elizabeth's. She was wise enough not to make light of what was real to the little one, but, raising her from the floor, she wiped the tears from her eyes and said, “Thou knowest, sweetheart, that thy broken promise was to the master, so to him must thou make confession. Tell him all, and perhaps it may not go so ill with thee after all. He is even now below and alone.”

Still troubled, yet somehow a little comforted, Sophie with great sighs and a heaving breast crept timidly down stairs. Herr Van Schendel sat musing by the window, and the room was pleasant with sunset light. Sophie, coming close, laid a small cool hand on his mighty one, saying, “I have broken the promise.”

“The promise to whom?”

“To thee: I have not been good.”

“What hast thou done?”

Sophie paled a little, but, fixing her blue eyes

on his, she confessed: "I was angry. I have kicked thy guest. I have struck him."

There was a strange contortion of the Peace Councillor's face; then he asked solemnly, "Thou hast not *killed* him?"

"Oh no—oh no, but he thinks my tongue is bad and my hands are bad."

"And thy kicking legs worst of all—doth he not? But come now, little one, let me hear more of these strange evil deeds of thine;" and the great Dutchman gathered the child into his arms.

Fear had begun to give place to hope in Sophie's mind, and she was able to describe more in detail her waywardness, her struggle, and her decision to confess even if she must suffer for it. Before she had answered half his shrewd questions she had curled down in his strong arms and felt sure he would forgive her.

There was a great rapping on the knocker of the outer door, announcing visitors. Van Schendel put the child on her feet, saying, "Thou mayest stay here and be our own little Sophie if thou wilt tell the truth, confess ever thy wrongdoing and try to be good." Then with a tender touch on her head he sent her

away happy as a bird. She danced about Dorothy, cooking the cakes, she played with Jacob and peeped through the door at Gianibelli, who with two friends had arrived. When Raymond joined the guests she retreated again, and meekly consented as Dorothy said, "Thou wilt eat thy cakes with me to-night; there is not room for thee with the master's friends."

Sophie's high spirits left her, and she sat very quiet while Jacob and Dorothy united to praise Herr Raymond and to express regret at his departure from the house.

Later in the evening Sophie crept in among the guests. Signor Gianibelli was playing chess with Vrouw Van Schendel, and the younger men were in lively conversation. Raymond sat a little apart thinking of the home from whose inmates he had received no tidings for weeks. Suddenly a low voice whispered in his ear, "If thou canst forgive me I will be glad. I will never kick thee any more, and my hands and my tongue will be good! *I am ashamed.*"

Raymond slipped his arm around the little creature, whispering in return, "I forgive thee and thy tongue, hands and legs. We are now friends."

A roguish smile played over her face; she lifted it and left a light little kiss on his cheek, sealing their friendship from that date. This evening it fell in with his humor to talk to her of his mother, his sister and the little cousin about whom she had lately refused to hear. At the last they were interrupted by the vehemence of Gianibelli. He had finished his game of chess, and had begged Vrouw Van Schendel's pardon for winning it (he had not lost a game since he had lived in Antwerp), and now was facing the room, earnestly talking. Herr Van Schendel had remarked a while before that if the city authorities refused to put in sufficient corn for all Antwerp, he and others like-minded could not be prevented from filling their private storehouses.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Gianibelli, with no merriment, but much sarcasm, "know you not what is this very day talked of by the magistrates—you a member of a council too!—talked of to-day, and sure to be done by the Board of Schepens before we are many days older?"

"Much nonsense is spoken," gruffly remarked the burgher, who occasionally resented the fact that the keen Italian learned more of public doings than the magistrate himself.

"Can you measure such folly?" cried Gianibelli. "Winter is coming, a siege is threatened, a famine will follow. In the face of all this measures are proposed (or will be to-morrow proposed, and, by my soul, I believe will be decided upon) to prevent the storing of provisions in private magazines. A maximum will be established on corn, and the skippers who run their cargoes through from Flushing at great risks will be paid, not according to the law of supply and demand, but such a sum as the magistrates think *reasonable*. 'Tis reasonable that the traders leave us to starve, and leave us they will once let the ordinance be passed."

"We men of Antwerp are not fools," grunted Van Schendel.

"Some men of Antwerp are not. But what of this great floating castle, this tower of Babel, we hear proposed? Had ever the gods more reason for laughter? A ship, half castle, half battering-ram, that shall destroy the bridge and end the war, mayhap convert the pope into a Calvinist or a Lutheran! Who knows but 'tis a part of the plan?" and, breathless with scorn made manifest in rapid speech, Gianibelli refreshed himself by a draught of beer.

“But the bridge can only be destroyed from the water, and how can we get to it by water without destructive vessels?”

“Ay, how?” echoed the Italian with a quick glance at his two more silent friends, the clock-maker Bory and Herr Timmerman.

They smiled intelligently, and the burgher remarked, “Men say, Gianibelli, that you are a sorcerer. If so, can you not rid us of these Spaniards by magic?”

“By an easier magic could I, as did the Egyptian sorcerers, tell how may these Spaniards like the frogs go up and come into thy house, and into thy bed-chamber, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading-troughs,” quoted the Italian, who knew the Scriptures as he seemed to know all lore, sacred and profane.

“A poor wizard and a worse prophet shall we find you, Gianibelli, but a wise friend to Antwerp, I doubt not,” said Van Schendel, calling Jacob to replenish the fire. A little after the guests departed and the members of the happy household went to rest, none of them as happy or as free from care as little Sophie.

CHAPTER III.

SUNNY FRANCE.

IT was a most beautiful evening of early summer. The rose flush of late sunset made even more attractive a lovely rural landscape of Central France. The red-roofed houses of a hamlet clustered at the foot of a rugged hill on whose brow was a mediæval castle. The greater part of the huge building was as perfect as when its massive towers were finished, but on one side the hill part of a chapel and a banquet-hall were in ruins. Some siege had wrought havoc there, but time and nature had clothed the ruin with verdure, and so with beauty.

Through the pretty hamlet and across the valley ran a rapid little stream. Fields of grain and poppies stretched away toward a range of hills, while here and there was dotted a wind-mill, a church-spire or a group of thatched cottages. About half an hour's walk from the hamlet were a few acres of woodland, through

which ran the river, and not far from the point where it rippled out again into the sunshine from under the solemn shade of the ancient trees was a modest chateau. No stranger would have taken it for anything but what it was—the pleasant old home of a once-well-to-do family. Disturbed as were the times, the rich and the titled of France lived in a style of great splendor.

Everything about the place was singularly silent: no servants idled around the stables, no hounds barked, no sleek cattle wandered home from the near pastures. There was a neglected but pleasant old garden, full of flowering shrubs and sweetest roses riotously blooming and lavish of perfume, but no fair ladies or gallant gentlemen strayed about its paths.

The chateau, however, was not deserted. Just as the rose color in the west began to deepen into violet and all the earth brooded in a pensive stillness, two young girls appeared in the long avenue of poplar trees that led from the main entrance to the road. Both were simply dressed; they wore no head-covering, and one carried a basket, but they could not have been mistaken for peasants. The elder,

a girl of sixteen, was a tall brunette with beautiful soft eyes, and, though graceful in movement as a southern woman, she was alert, earnest in manner and expression. Her companion was not yet twelve years old, a rosy-cheeked, sprightly girl with dark hair and large, merry blue eyes. She carried on her arm the basket filled with white roses, and when she glanced at them her blue eyes saddened. They cleared again as the soft wind blew the hair from her temples, and she could not help enjoying the evening glow and beauty. Life for the last few weeks had been terribly hard and dark in the chateau. It was almost as dark now to Jeanne Raymond, the elder girl and Marie's cousin.

The spring had been very bright and happy. First had come a letter from the only and well-beloved son of the family. He was in health, and hoped soon to return to join the standard of Henri Quatre, to whom all the Huguenots of France now looked for their future well-being. A letter was a great event in those times, and the arrival of a second one was most surprising. This was, moreover, a legal communication, causing Madame Raymond much perplexity.

A valuable estate not far from Paris had been for two centuries in the hands of Raymonds who were Romanists in high favor at the French court. By a strange succession of events, needless to relate, this branch of the family had just become extinct, and madame, the mother of Louis, had been informed that her son could rightfully claim the lands. This news was very welcome, for Louis was likely to succeed to little else than four walls, the care of his family and a spotless record. For a few days nothing but the letter was talked of; then it was utterly forgotten in the trouble that fell on them.

This night Marie suddenly exclaimed, "What of the surprise we were planning for cousin Louis, dear Jeanne? Thou knowest we were to have brave new hangings for the dining-room, and tapestry to replace that in which old Simon so stupidly burned holes. Then the dear aunt said if we were to be rich and to use all our old silver, there would be need of replenishing the linen stores, and—" Marie stopped abruptly, for the gloom that overcast her cousin's face was darker at every word Marie had uttered.

"Oh, Marie! now that they are gone dost thou not see how much worse it would seem to alter the old rooms? What would Louis care for a glitter of silver on the table and dear mother's chair empty? If I have my will, never a time-worn thing will go until Louis brings a new mistress to the home."

"Yes, my cousin: don't think me heartless. I love far better the old, for they have seen and touched it; only I cannot help recalling the talk, and what we did in those last days when my mother and thine read the letter over and over, and were for sending to Paster Bercier for advice."

"The almond trees were all pink in the garden that noon the messenger brought it," said Jeanne, "and dinner was just served, but it was hours after when we ate. We had planned wonderful things while the pottage grew cold as a stone."

A cluster of roses fell unheeded from the basket as the two girls turned into a narrow path leading to a graveyard, and neither spoke for a while. In the mind of each were pictures of the two gracious women who lately made home-like the now desolate chateau. One day,

as she sat reading her Bible, the elder (Jeanne's mother) had fainted. They had carried her to her bed, and she never rose from it. A lingering fever sapped her strength, and before they thought her dangerously ill she had slipped out of life. The day she was buried Marie's mother, Madame Dubois, was taken violently ill, and after a few days of delirium had followed her sister. A

"I think," said Jeanne as they came in sight of the little Huguenot chapel and the graves in the soft green turf all around its ivied walls,—
"I think I must speak with the pastor again of the letter. There was no doubt something to be done regarding it."

"If we only could learn where Louis is and how to get a message to him!" said Marie.

"That is hopeless: we must just await his coming, it may be in a month, it may be a year, for I hear it said things have not turned out in the north as he fancied they would do when he wrote that he might come to us;" and, sighing, Jeanne entered the churchyard.

They sought the two mounds and covered them with the pure white roses, weeping afresh with the intensity of youth overwhelmed with a first great sorrow. So absorbed were they that

neither of them heard footsteps over the grass until there came a gentle touch on Marie's hair, and Jeanne looked up into the kind old face of Pastor Bercier. He smoothed the little girl's hair in a fatherly way, but spoke to Jeanne: "Don't let thyself get to thinking that thy loved ones are here. They are for ever with the Lord, blessed and removed from all trouble or shedding of tears. That knowledge will mean more to thee, my child, as the years go by. Now come, I will walk home with thee."

The young girls rose up quickly and followed him. When they left the shaded churchyard he began to draw off their minds from their affliction by talking of matters in the hamlet. There were many Huguenots in and about the village, but no family of rank or wealth. Many were tradesmen, and of these a part had recently gone away, some to the Low Countries, more to England. The majority of the people in the province were Romanists.

The moon had come up into a sky still faintly tinted with sunset hues, and the loveliness of the evening tempted the pastor and the two girls to take the longest way to the chateau. It led them across a meadow and by a little bridge

over the river. From the bridge was a fine view of the old castle. Looking toward it, Jeanne exclaimed, "How many lights! I hear music. The count must be at home."

"He came a fortnight since, and many and merry are the revels held there. A score of guests came with him from Paris."

"He is a bad man, father, is he not?" asked little Marie.

"He is kind to his own, but he is no friend of the Huguenots. The old count, his father, was as zealous a Romanist as ever went to mass, but he had a softer heart," replied Pastor Bercier with a sudden sternness, as if recalling some disagreeable fact or fancy.

Jeanne, caring nothing for the Count d'Estre, began to ask the old man about political matters and what he thought of the chances of Louis Raymond's return. He greatly wished that he could give her some accurate information. Louis had been absent two years. The times were most unsettled. No one knew where a letter would find him, and to send a letter in those days was to shoot an arrow into the dark. All that day the good man had been pondering the problem of the future well-being of the

young girls. In the weeks that they had been in affliction he himself had passed through a struggle, and had resolved to leave his beloved land. In the month to come his wife and he were to join a little band of Huguenots who had resolved to seek homes in England. He had meant to tell the young girls of this plan to-night, but they were so sad already he decided to await the sunshine. They clung to him as to no other comforter.

He accompanied them all the way home; then, yielding to their entreaties, went in for a little refreshment. Jeanne hastened to light candles, Marie brought out some simple cakes, while their one servant, old Julie, bustled around for a bottle of wine, glad enough to hear the sound of voices. The old man ate sparingly, but talked more cheerily than he felt; then, before going, he read a psalm and prayed with and for the orphan girls. They went to rest calmed and somewhat comforted.

The next day life seemed a great deal brighter. Julie wisely opened all the doors and windows, letting in the perfume of the roses and the songs of the birds. The girls went about their simple duties, for beyond a little music,

embroidery, and education enough to read the psalms and the gospels, their training had been in the household arts. About the middle of the forenoon Marie exclaimed,

“Jeanne, there are two horsemen alighting, and one is Count d’Estre. He cometh here.”

“Thou dreamest, child. The count was never here since we were born. He visits not Huguenots unless they be nobles, perhaps not then.”

“But I tell thee he comes up the poplar avenue, and one with him who wears a long black robe like Regnier the advocate, but ’tis no person whom we know hereabouts.”

Jeanne ran to see for herself; then, assured that Marie had not made a mistake, she awaited in much perplexity the arrival of their guests. If not an openly-avowed enemy, the count had never been considered a friend to the Raymonds, either father or son.

“Julie will do some most awkward thing,” said quick-witted Marie. “I doubt not she may ask him for what he cometh before ever his foot touch the threshold.”

“Considering his age and rank, it is fitting I go to meet him,” said Jeanne, going swiftly

toward the open door just as the two men approached.

The count was a man of sixty, slightly lame since youth. For this reason, shut out from military life, he had been a courtier. More than half his life was spent in Paris—a life of scheming, of intrigue and of pleasure. A daughter of the Raymonds, a Huguenot, was not more than a maid-servant in his eyes, yet, seeing Jeanne to be as fair and stately as any lily in the near garden, he bent his head in courteous greeting. She returned it gravely, and stepped back that they might enter. On the threshold the count halted, and with an air of gracious condescension expressed his regret that Mademoiselle Raymond had lost a mother so excellent as hers had no doubt been. He then presented his companion, Monsieur Colbert, an advocate from Paris. Begging Jeanne to be seated, he took a chair by the table of the room they had entered and asked, “Is monsieur your brother yet at home?”

“He comes soon, we hope,” replied Jeanne.

“I would fain see him or some one of the family somewhat older than yourself,” said the count.

“That is a thing impossible, for my brother and myself are the last of our family.”

“’Tis a matter that must needs be put in order, though just now it be troublesome to all concerned. Heard you not lately from an advocate in Paris regarding the estates of one Pierre Raymond?” asked the advocate.

“Such a letter came, but little thought was given to it, for soon after our great trouble fell on us.”

“’Tis better so. I would advise that you let the thing not overjoy you. The writer was far too hasty. Monsieur Colbert here has come out from Paris on this same matter, for Pierre Raymond had dealings long and many with me. Give me, I pray you, the letter. Regnier and your good friend Pastor Bercier are to be this day at the castle to consider the matter.”

The count spoke with the calm authority of one used to instant obedience, and it never occurred to Jeanne to do anything but to comply with his request.

She went to a handsome old cabinet where her mother kept her few valuables, and found the epistle with its heavy seal. The advocate opened, read and carefully took charge of it.

Meanwhile the count had glanced about the room and studied Jeanne as she stood before the cabinet.

"The little one is not a sister?" he remarked, turning at last to Marie, who answered shyly, "I am a cousin."

"'Tis not well for maidens like you to dwell here alone. It is more fitting that you go into the home of relatives and await there the return of your brother—if he return. In these days men dawdle not long about hearthstones." So saying, the Count d'Estre rose slowly by reason of his lameness, but not ungracefully, and departed. Once outside the door, he stopped and leisurely surveyed the old chateau, letting his eyes wander from it to all the outlying buildings, meadows and woodland.

The young girls watched them out of sight.

"Dost thou not think he has a very grand air, Jeanne?"

"Yes, and a smooth voice, but his eyes are cold blue like steel. I believe that his politeness is no more a part of himself than is his fine mantle, and that it would be as easily dropped."

"Did I not hear thee say thou wast once in-

side the castle?" asked Marie. "Tell me, was it most splendid?"

"By no means was it splendid," replied Jeanne.

"They tell me the count makes little of this place, but that his mansion in Paris is magnificent enough for a prince. Wouldst thou like life in a palace, Jeanne?"

"Not I. My mother told me she could not without blushing think even of what the court ladies in Paris busied themselves with. Although I am almost a woman, she said it was not seemly for me to know aught of life there." Then, seeing by her little cousin's innocent bewilderment that she had puzzled the child, she began to talk of a bit of embroidery that she was making.

In the afternoon Marie, who found the days very lonely, was made happy by a chance discovery. In a cozy nook of an outhouse the family cat had hidden four kittens as round as balls and as full of frolic as only fat kittens can be. The little girl was not proof against their fascinations, and Jeanne was left to her own thoughts.

Late in the day there was a step at the door-

stone, and, looking up, Jeanne was glad to see again Pastor Bercier. He sank into a chair and wiped his forehead as if very warm and weary, but he refused all offers of refreshment, and sat long in meditation before he remarked, "I would thy brother Louis were here."

"So said Count d'Estre this morning."

"With no sincerity, though were Louis here he could do little or nothing."

"But, father, there is really not so much to do that old Julie and I cannot attend to, for a few months at least.

"Jeanne," said the old man earnestly, "thou art not a child now; thy mother was no older when I gave her in marriage to thy father. I have a hard matter to open before thee—hard and most unjust—but thou knowest (at least by hearsay) that justice is not for Huguenots. The time has come when thou must learn it by experience. Count d'Estre hath by law—such law as men high in court favor employ to gain their ends,—the count hath laid claim to the estates of that Raymond whose heir is by right thy brother Louis. This advocate, Colbert, hath been in consultation with the one who wrote thy mother, and hath corrupted him. The letter

surrendered by thee to-day, and doubtless now destroyed, would better be to thee as if never written. The lands are lost to thee."

"Was I in the wrong, father, to give it up? The count demanded it as one who has a right."

"Thou didst only what any innocent one would have done in thy place, dear child, and the end would have been the same in any case."

"Well, then, my father, let not our matters trouble thee. Can one lose what one has never possessed? My brother had no thought of owning these lands, so what will he care that he has them not? Moreover, my mother often said that enough was far better than wealth for a Huguenot family. Wealth gave importance, and to be conspicuous is to be in danger."

"True, but right is right. I know that Count d'Estre hath this day robbed the fatherless."

"He will suffer most in the end, then, as my mother would say."

"If that were all, Jeanne, that I had to tell thee of evil!"

"What? my *brother*? Louis is not dead? Oh, father, tell—"

"No, no, my child! Not one word know I of Louis."

"Then there is no one left to die but Marie," said Jeanne, excitement giving way to sudden dejection.

"Death is not the worst of evils, Jeanne; sin and wrong are far more dreadful. During thy mother's life hast thou ever heard one word of a debt to Count d'Estre—of the title to this land and house being a disputed point between thy father and Count d'Estre's father?"

"Never."

"Well, Jeanne, the count now claims that in studying records relating to land hereabouts and to the other Raymond estate he finds that Louis has not a valid claim to one foot of land."

"But, father," exclaimed the astonished girl, "such a pretension is absurd. The Raymonds have lived here for two centuries at least. There must be legal methods to prove the count a robber."

"He has no right, but from what I learned to-day of Paris advocates with courtiers behind them I know the count's gold will buy power. It is best that the truth be told thee at once. The Raymonds are to be dispossessed of every inch of ground they have hitherto called their

own. Nothing remains to thee but the house-belongings that thou canst carry away."

"*Carry away?* We must leave the chateau—go away from *our home?*"

"It is the Count d'Estre's estate from this day forth by such law as men wield when Satan is lawgiver. In the three weeks to come thou canst remove thy belongings to my house, which shall be thine while a roof covers me."

"But, father, I cannot understand. Were Louis here could he not resist this claim and hold his own?"

"He could not. Justice, mercy and law are to-day words without any meaning in France when used by a papist of the court of the Medicis in regard to a Huguenot."

Jeanne gazed at the old man's sad face, and listened to him with the idea that she was dreaming another of the gloomy dreams that had come to her since her recent trouble. But no, they were surely sitting together in the light of the pleasant summer afternoon, the bees were droning in the flowers under the window, Julie was singing one of her most unmusical hymns in the distant kitchen.

"There is another matter that I will talk of

with thee later, Jeanne—one that may hold comfort for thee and thine. In the mean time be not utterly cast down. Remember, God ruleth, and he is the God of the widow and the fatherless.” So with many other kind words Pastor Bercier lingered to console her before leaving her to realize what had occurred. His words were recalled long after, but at the time Jeanne was able only to take in one idea: she had lost not only her mother, but her home.

For a day or two this impression of unreality haunted the poor girl. She would try to fancy strangers living in the chateau, and would find herself prompted to go to her mother with some household matter. The third day Pastor Bercier wisely sent his good wife to her. A more unworldly man than the Huguenot pastor never existed. He was very indignant at Count d’Estre for his injustice, but the loss of houses and lands was in itself a small matter to him. It was well for him that Madame Bercier was one of the most frugal, industrious and knowing of housewives. She was also a merry-hearted little body in bright days and a trusting one in dark times.

She came bustling in one morning with a

smile for Marie and a laugh outright at the kittens.

Jeanne cried: "Oh, dear Madame Bercier, I am so glad to see thee! It has just come to me what the kind pastor said, but we cannot burden you with our support. Thou art not rich."

"Jeanne, 'tis of all this I have come to talk." She stopped a moment to look about the room, and suddenly resumed: "This has been a bright home, and many memories are thine own that none can take from thee; but, Jeanne, in days to come it would be a sad place, lacking ever the forms and faces of the mother and aunt. The property has been wrung from thee by wrong, but a home can be elsewhere brighter, and in time as dear to thee."

Jeanne's heart had been full of gratitude for the refuge offered her by the pastor, yet while madame talked she could not but contrast his very humble home with the chateau.

"And now, dear child, I have somewhat to say that will much surprise thee. Hast thou ever heard of Canterbury?"

"'Tis a city of England, is it not?" replied Jeanne.

"A most fair city, I am told, with a wondrously beautiful cathedral, out of which devout men have cast images and relics of false saints, where mass is no longer said, but where Protestants worship God in spirit and in truth. A part (not the finest—in faith; 'tis the crypt, I believe) has been given to the Huguenots for a place of worship; and in this same city our people abide in great peace compared to their condition in France. Many of them are tradesmen and work at their trades with much profit."

"Yes," assented Jeanne, wondering a little that the good lady did not better understand how her own affairs were filling all her thoughts in these days. What was Canterbury to her, or the profit of tradespeople?

"More of my husband's friends are now in Canterbury and in Leyden than are in France."

"And Julie says," suddenly exclaimed Marie, dropping the kittens on the floor, "that a number more are going to England very soon, and that they want Pastor Bercier to go with them."

"He has consented to go by the middle of July, and now, children, we want you to join us.—I have come to-day, Jeanne, to plan with

thee. Thou knowest we have no child but Bertrand. Oh, how often have I wished for daughters! and now God has given thee into our care. We will seek together this new country and make a happy home for ourselves. When Louis returns or when one can reach him by letter, we will welcome him to a place with no sad memories. Now, Jeanne dear, thou canst take thy mother's treasures with certain house-stuff, as linen and the like, but of the heavy and cumbersome things none can be carried. 'Tis not pleasant to sell them, but turned into money the gold will serve thee well some time."

The little bright-eyed woman's voice was so eagerly sympathetic and her words so well chosen that Jeanne's fancied future seemed to change as a dark landscape brightens when the sun comes out over it from heavy rain-clouds. Her life had been very monotonous. She had never been a league from home. If the dear old chateau must have strangers within its gates, it would indeed be pleasant to get far away from the knowledge, or at least the evidence of it.

"But, dear Madame Bercier, disguise thy benevolence as thou mayest, the adding of two

more to thy household will cost, and we know the good pastor's treasures are chiefly in heaven. The gold he hath on earth he ever divides with others so generously he may be himself straitened hereafter for bread."

"I am right glad, Jeanne, thou speakest plainly out, for I can tell thee all I plan, and 'tis not to let thee feel thyself or Marie to be dependent. First, the Huguenots of Canterbury are, many of them, friends and relatives of ours. They have sent for us. Already are they working in silk and in other well-paying industries; taxes are lighter and food cheaper in England to-day than in France. Queen Elizabeth loveth not too well such Protestants as are not of the English Church, still she protecteth quiet folk like ours. My husband hath been promised a better living than ever he had here. Now, Jeanne, thou hast raiment enough for years, and so has Marie from her mother's stores. We will of the best lay aside linen and silver for marriage portions; then, dear, the Raymond silver and portable household possessions that thou couldst bring for daily use would be, I confess, most welcome, for we ourselves buy never new, and the pastor has long ago parted

with about all he could sell and give to the poor. 'Tis very worldly in me, but I dearly love well-set boards, full linen-chests and the like."

How soothing and prosaically interesting were these homely details after weeks of tension and gloom! Before the pastor's light-footed wife had been an hour in the house she was looking with the girls over their household treasures, explaining details of their journey—that long wonderful pilgrimage, first to Rouen, then to the seaport, and across the perilous Channel to Dover.

No Raymond save Louis had ever been so far from home, at least to Jeanne's knowledge. Excitement brought out a rich red glow on her cheeks, and her eyes were once more brilliant with youthful animation.

"Thy blessed mother, Jeanne, is in the land of perfect happiness, so think it not wrong to take heart again and make life bright for thyself and Marie. 'Tis what she would have thee do," continued Madame Bercier, unfolding certain wide breadths of curious drapery that Jeanne had showed her, and instantly crying out in admiration at the curious fabric into which were woven rare colors and threads of

gold: "'Tis Peter the Hermit and the starting of the first crusade. I have seen elsewhere the same design. Jeanne, in the little home here we had never a salon fit for guests, only the one room besides the bed-rooms and kitchen. With all thy riches we will make a most beautiful home in Canterbury."

A less sincere soul would have offered Jeanne only sympathy, and it may be talk of spiritualities. Madame's honest gladness that Jeanne had goodly piles of linen and many things they could enjoy together was a practical proof that Jeanne would not be regarded by her as an object of charity. Madame Bercier spent the day, and if, when she left the young girls at night, Jeanne seemed to herself to have closed a chapter of her life-book, she felt a new interest in the pages still unread.

There was time for nothing in the days that followed but work from dawn until dark. It may have been that Count d'Estre expected litigation and rebellion to follow his unjust claims on the chateau, for he acknowledged to the mean-spirited advocate of the little village that this peaceful flitting of the occupants surprised him. A remnant of shame, too, may

have been left in him, for many things that Jeanne and Marie girls were not able to take with them were bought by the count's agent, and the sum returned was double what thrifty Madame Bercier had dared to hope for. Such a help and friend had madame become that already the young girls seemed to have found in her a second mother.

When all was in order there was a little time to go from house to house bidding good-bye to lifelong friends. Marie had fits of passionate grief at leaving certain little playmates, but, on the whole, her keen interest in the coming journey and the new sights and scenes excited similar emotions in her older cousin.

The day they were to leave the chateau for ever the two girls, having wandered alone through the dismantled rooms, went sadly into the sunny old garden. How peaceful all the landscape seemed! and how pleasant the weed-grown walks among the roses!

"It is wicked! it is shameful!" exclaimed Jeanne with passion. "We might have lived here all our lives. Louis would have come home. Some day he would have married; then there would be little children to play here as we

have played. Raymonds have been here for two hundred years, and should be for centuries more."

"Jeanne dear," broke in the deep voice of Pastor Bercier, "I have come to show thee a strange thing. In the long course we often see that all things (even wrong and injustice) *work together* for good to those that love God. To-day I see it most wonderfully manifest. The count has turned thee out of France into a new home made ready for thee. Had he not done it, worse would have befallen thee. News cometh this day of an edict of Nemours. All other edicts of religious peace or toleration toward Huguenots are revoked. Those who stay in France will be forced to give up their religion or die on the gallows. Their property will be confiscated, and they are to-day stripped of all honors, offices and privileges. There is no choice but the Roman Catholic creed or perpetual exile for the Protestant. To stay here would have been an impossibility for thee had there been no Count d'Estre. As it is, we are saved hot haste, confusion and some loss."

CHAPTER IV.

ANTWERP AGAIN.

IT was a sunny morning early in March, 1585, and one peeping again into the house of Burgher Van Schendel would have seen no change. Every room was as spotlessly clean as ever, as bright and as cheerful. In the kitchen there was the same array of copper saucepans and homely utensils polished to the brightness of gold and silver. But if the place itself was unchanged, there was a difference somewhere. For one thing, Dorothy had gone. The rougher work of the house was now done by Jacob, and the lighter tasks by the good vrouw herself. In former times the cooking for the family had been by no means a "light" affair, but herein was indeed a change, a most ominous and terrible one. There were no odors of savory meats or dainty cakes, no frying, boiling or stewing of fish or game in these days. It had come to be a simple question of what would keep the family from starvation—on how little they could

live, and where that little was to come from. Van Schendel was not poor, and before such action became an impossibility he had stored his warehouses with grain in anticipation of this time of need. But when the stress came the big-hearted patriot could not see his neighbors starve, and that which would have been enough for a few was scant supply for many. Dorothy had been sent out of Antwerp while flight was feasible. Jacob had been, for his own good, dismissed, but had refused to go. The state of affairs in the city can be told in few words: Six months before the people had their fate and that of Antwerp in their own hands, but they would not believe that danger impended. When too late they resolved to do what had passed out of their power to accomplish. The great dyke Kowenstyn, which the butchers of Antwerp had refused to destroy, was covered with Spanish fortresses, now black with Spanish cannon. All communication with friendly provinces was cut off, and, most terrible of realities, there was Parma's bridge, magnificent in its solidity. Day by day for long months the Spanish prince had seen it grow until now his marvelous undertaking was complete. It was

stronger than the North Sea, stronger than the icebergs, and every Antwerp citizen had heard of Parma's message: "Tell the people that the siege will never be abandoned, and that this bridge will be my sepulchre or my pathway into Antwerp."

This bright morning in March, Vrouw Van Schendel sat musing on many things; her work was in her hands, but her fingers were idle. She wondered if she had been obstinate in refusing months previous to leave the city with Hubert and Sophie. She had meant to do right, but she could not leave her husband, while Hubert declared with scorn that he was no pampered child, but was almost a man, an Antwerp citizen. He would not run for fear of what might come. Near the lady sat Sophie. She had lost something of her restlessness and vivacity, but had gained in sweetness. It grieved the vrouw that she was both pale and thin. No one in the house had actually suffered for food yet, or so Vrouw Van Schendel believed, but each one's portion was simple and meagre. She did not know that the burgher, when her back was turned, robbed himself for Sophie or restored to the dish untasted morsels.

Little Sophie was very patient and unselfish. Never once since Hubert gave her a hint had she teased for more or asked for anything between meals.

To-day she gravely remarked, "I am glad that my child hath a wooden stomach, for if she had one of flesh she would ask me for my broth."

"And my little Sophie needs all her own broth," said the lady with a faint smile.

"Dost thou not wish Sophie had wood inside her, and there would be more food for the rest?" asked the child.

"No, no, little one. I only wish there was more for thee."

"Was it not most unkind of my cat to run away into the streets and never come again, when I shared all with her?" asked Sophie.

"Somebody found and kept her perhaps, so she could not return."

"Will she be hungry?"

"No, never again," replied Vrouw Van Schendel, so confidently that Sophie was comforted, never knowing, as the lady knew, how every cat, dog and captured rat was becoming much-prized food in Antwerp.

The sunshine streamed in at the windows, and, falling on Sophie's yellow curls, brightened the little figure with the quaint doll into a pretty picture. Vrouw Van Schendel's heart grew warm within her as she reflected that her own little girl would never know want. She felt herself glad to be able in a measure to shield and comfort another mother's darling.

There was a step at the door, and Van Schendel entered. Perhaps in his wife's eyes the good burgher had always been handsome, even when very fat and florid, but never had he looked as well as now, for all superfluous flesh had vanished. Moreover, there was a new gentleness with much gravity in his manner, that once had been impetuous and overbearing. The moment he was in his own chair Sophie hastened to seat herself with him, tucking the ugly doll snugly under his ear.

"Is aught that is new talked over in the city?" asked his wife.

"Nothing, sweetheart. I did but come from Gianibelli's house, and he rages like one beside himself."

"Wherefore?"

"He demanded of the senate a while ago

three great ships from the fleet, the Orange, the Post, and the Golden Lion, and with them also fifty or sixty scows. Having these, he vows he might save Antwerp."

"What think you?"

"That he might have them had I the power to give them. The senate listens to his plans and half approves, then opposes; but it has granted him two smaller boats and with them Gianibelli alone knows what he will do."

"Raymond? Does he not have the 'wizard's' full confidence?" asked the vrouw.

"That he has. The two are ever together, or the four rather, for Bory and Timmermann are helpers also."

"We see less of Raymond than I could wish."

"He bade me tell you that he had letters from his home. They have made him a little homesick," returned Van Schendel, starting so suddenly that Sophie's doll turned a somersault and struck on her hard head.

The startled group looked toward the kitchen door, which Jacob had burst open most violently. Usually the dwarf was very mannerly, but this morning he broke into an exultant laugh and stood grinning with delight. He held the

skirt of his course blue frock gathered up like a pouch, and hurried toward Vrouw Van Schendel to show its contents—two handsome great fish. The excitement produced was all Jacob could desire; he shuffled and giggled, gloated over the treasures and beamed on his friends.

“Oh put them in water, Jacob; they are choking,” cried Sophie.

“Put them in the frying-pan,” stuttered Jacob, replying to Van Schendel’s question of where in all the town he got such delicacies: “Oh, my old mother managed it, she and a fisherman and—never let us ask who the other one was, so it was not the devil himself.—I go to clean them, my lady,” and Jacob made a triumphant exit. A second after he thrust into the doorway his big head, modestly suggesting, “I met the French gentleman. I showed him my prize.”

“Since it is your prize, good Jacob, I do not ask a guest to help enjoy it,” laughingly said the burgher.

“And since Jacob is a servant it ill becomes him to invite guests for his own master,” returned the dwarf; “but might not Sophie go bid Monsieur Raymond come dine with you?”

“She will gladly go, and we will welcome him

right heartily," said the lady of the house, preparing to get ready with pleasure something worth calling a meal.

Sophie hastened to throw over her head a pretty kerchief, and tripped away to find her "cousin Louis," for so she now called Raymond. It was only a little way to the Grand Place, where, in a simple apartment in an old house, the young man lived most frugally. Stopping for nothing, the little girl turned under an archway, and was rushing up stairs when Raymond exclaimed, "Not so fast, *ma petite*, or thou wilt quite run over me."

Breathless with eagerness, Sophie delivered her message. The invitation to dinner was instantly accepted, while Sophie persisted, "Come now, dear cousin. A walk with thee is so pleasant, and 'tis long, oh so long! since I have seen thee."

"At least five days," laughed Raymond, taking her little hand in his and turning into the street with her. When once in the sunshine they loitered along, chatting of everything that interested either of them. At first it was the fine great hôtel de ville, or town-hall, that had just been restored after its partial destruction

by the Spaniards twenty years before. Next it was a bird's nest in the branches of a tree whose tender green leaves were just unfolding. The grass in the place was already spring-like in hue and quantity, although to Raymond the season seemed not far advanced. He told Sophie that often at home he had seen the beautiful almond trees in bloom at that time of year. Sophie knew already of those fair pink blossoms: she could have told almost everything in and about that old chateau in Southern France, for she had asked so many questions.

"I have this very day written to the dear mother that, God willing, I will return to her soon. I think we will not be caged up here in Antwerp many more weeks, but will get liberty to fly abroad."

"But thou wilt come again to see us, and wilt thou not bring a cousin Jeanne or Marie, and shall I not go visit thy family some day?"

"Let us hope for great things," replied Raymond with rather evasive heartiness, and the tone more than the words satisfied Sophie, who asked, "Did they send thee a letter from France?"

"That they did, and such a welcome and pre-

cious one! Three months was it in getting to me, and it found me by a miracle almost. Thou shalt hear it read to Vrouw Van Schendel, and know of Jeanne's birthday fête, of little Marie's rabbits, of a freshet that tore away the bridge over the river, of a wonderful journey our good pastor Bercier made to Paris, and how he by strange chance did see the king; and what thinkest thou his royalty wore?"

"A crown of gold and diamonds," exclaimed Sophie.

"Not so, but a little velvet cap on his pretty curls, and hanging from his neck a little basket full of puppies—this royal fool of a Valois!"

"Is he thy king?"

"Not he! The Huguenots' king is Henry of Navarre, uncrowned as yet, but France awaits him."

"Oh, my cousin, we have fish for dinner," was Sophie's next irrelevant but joyous exclamation as they came in sight of Van Schendel's hospitable mansion. "Jacob got it nobody knows where, and mamma says that Jacob shall not serve us as usual, but shall have his own very big portion, and shall eat when we eat; only, Jacob will have it at his own place in the

kitchen. He would not be at ease elsewhere, mamma says."

With that Hubert flung wide open the door and warmly greeted the guest.

"There surely can be no greater proof of love in these days than for one friend to ask another to eat with him," laughed Raymond; while Sophie on the very threshold began to dance, crying, "Dost thou not smell those beautiful fish, my cousin?"

"Thou little gourmand!" cried Van Schendel. "To-day thou wilt not mourn thy cat, for thou canst eat her share."

"Welcome again," said Vrouw Van Schendel, coming to greet Louis. "I am glad to see you, and very glad to learn that you have letters from home."

"Yes, one from the mother and sister, with another from a good friend, our pastor Bercier, a man to make one believe in goodness even in France."

"Thou hast but a poor opinion of thy country," said the burgher.

"Not so of France; 'tis as goodly a land as God ever made. But hear what one high in power there says of society under Henry of

Valois: 'There is no more truth, no more justice, no more mercy. To slander, to lie, to rob, to steal,—all things are permitted save to do right and to speak the truth,'” replied Raymond earnestly.

“Like king, like people,” commented Van Schendel. “What else could be with a monarch who loves, they say, to wear silken flounces, a jewelled stomacher, to paint his cheeks, bare his breast and put on all a woman’s daintiest gear?”

“Would France be any better off were Henry of Guise to gain the throne?” asked Hubert, who liked to get Raymond excited over the matters that were of deepest interest to him.

“What answer to that question can you expect from a Huguenot, if you reflect that it was Henry of Guise whose greatest achievement has been the massacre of St Bartholomew, for all the details of that plot were of his devising?”

“You have never told us, Louis, how it fared with your family that terrible day,” said Hubert.

“My father,” replied the young Frenchman, “had gone to Paris for the first time in fifteen years. He never returned, and the exact manner of his murder we could not ascertain.

But one man living on the street, a Huguenot and also a stranger, escaped death. He told of the slaughter about daybreak of every man, woman and child in the house where my father was the guest of Huguenots. Their headless bodies hung from windows; gateways were blocked with dead and dying; doors were smeared with gore, while human fiends dragged bodies through the blood-slippery streets to the Seine. The massacre spread throughout all France, but in God's mercy our little hamlet was spared. Count d'Estre is the only person living there of any importance. He was absent. The Catholics are a simple and poor people, and so small is the place that families have intermarried even with Huguenots, and there is not the enmity common elsewhere between the two parties. Pastor Bercier once told me the reason for this. The old priest of our hamlet is a mild and kindly creature. He received instructions what to do with heretics, but he pretended not to understand them, and the slaughter was stayed before it reached us from without. Nobody wants his place, which is a very poor one, else he had suffered for his lukewarmness."

"'Tis not clear to me," said Hubert, "why

the Netherlands want to ally themselves to France."

"That is because you see but one side," replied his father. "France is not the court, and even this puppet of a king hath kept good faith with the Protestants.—You Huguenots have had for eight years the religious freedom you asked for. We need France to help us against Spain."

"Yes, the Huguenots declare that Henry will keep his word, but I doubt it," said Raymond. "I cannot hope aught for you here in the Netherlands if your scheme for annexation with France succeeds. England is your true friend, if I mistake not."

"Our envoys are now in Paris, and what the outcome will be God only knows. If England would help us, why doth she so hang back?"

"Because her king is a queen, and none ever knoweth what next with her," laughed Raymond.

"A most stingy queen," muttered the burgher; and at that Vrouw Van Schendel announced that the feast was ready. A very modest repast it was, without side-dishes or sweets, wines or

cake; but hunger is the sovereign sauce, and Jacob's fish were enjoyed to the utmost.

The table-talk was of more cheerful matters. Young Raymond made them almost fancy they had been in the sunny valley and spent hours in the homelike chateau. Vrouw Van Schendel liked to know the details of housekeeping where the customs were quite different. Hubert half envied Raymond when he gave enthusiastic accounts of his boyhood days spent in rural sports, in the woods, and on the river. All his listeners felt an increase of respect and liking for the young Frenchman when with tearful eyes he talked of his lady mother, her faith under the shock of his father's murder, her gentleness, yet her bravery—her words when news came of the massacre and reports that every Huguenot was to be slain: “Children, the time may come when we must die for our faith, but, remember, there can *never be a time for us to deny it and live.*”

“Father,” asked Hubert when the meal was ended, “you never like to consider that Antwerp can fall again to the Spaniards, but if it should, what then?”

“Then, beyond a doubt, worship according to

Protestant forms will be prohibited; perhaps our property will be forfeited; possibly we may be allowed to go in peace to some Protestant province. I think we would seek a home in Leyden."

"There are many Huguenots there, are there not?" asked Raymond.

"Many Protestants from all countries," replied Van Schendel.

There was a half hour more of conversation, and then the burgher sent Hubert with a message to a distant part of the city. Vrouw Van Schendel went about some house duty, and Sophie followed her. The magistrate and the young engineer, left alone, began a somewhat more confidential discourse about matters carefully kept secret lest the enemy should get wind of what seemed Antwerp's last hope. Indeed, few people, even in the city, knew of Gianibelli's having any scheme whatever. Herr Van Schendel had awaited patiently a time when he or Raymond would entrust him with the former's plans.

"I have not had so much as a sight of Gianibelli for wellnigh a month," said the burgher.

"I can well believe it," returned young Ray-

mond, "for so busy is he that he scarce sleeps two hours of a night."

"And yet time is the one thing in Antwerp of which men have a full supply and to spare."

"The Italian has none too much, and has not failed to borrow plenty of mine and me with it. What think you, Van Schendel? He sets himself to prepare twice seven thousand pounds of gunpowder of a sort far better, he thinks, than any ever known, and to have it done by a month hence."

"No wonder 'tis said he has been in league with Satan," commented the Dutchman.

"That is but a small half of what he works, and verily if Satan be vastly more cunning and industrious, he must truly be a hard master."

Glancing about, Raymond arose and shut every door before he came back to make clear to Van Schendel what was Gianibelli's plan.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOPE AND THE FORTUNE.

IT was hard for Burgher Van Schendel to realize that Hubert was nearing manhood. He never coddled him; all his life he had aimed to fit him to "endure hardness as a good soldier," both of the cross and of his country, if more perilous times should overtake them. Still, so lately had Hubert been a curly-headed boy at play that sometimes the father sorely tried the young man by sharp enforcement of his paternal authority. At such times, however, Vrouw Van Schendel came gently between them, and there was no clashing of wills. A day dawned when the father said to the son for the last time, "Thou shalt." The events that followed opened his eyes to the fact that Hubert was no stripling.

It was a mild, pleasant evening early in April, and everybody in Antwerp seemed to be in the streets or squares. None were quietly

chatting on doorsteps or languidly enjoying the somewhat enervating warmth. All were alert, excited, talking in eager tones, this man questioning, that one explaining some matter in which the whole city seemed interested. There was a sudden lull in the tumult near the cathedral as four men pushed their way through the crowd.

"'Tis he! 'tis the wizard and his helpers," whispered one.

"Ay, ay! Men say he knows every black art that the devil himself has been able to teach him," echoed a second, adding, "All the better, say I, if so be he use his arts against the Spaniards."

"'Tis proof plain to me that Gianibelli has naught to do with the devil or he would love the devil's own brood, instead (as all the world knows) of hating the Spaniards," commented a third.

But, heedless alike of comments and scrutiny curious, timid or friendly, the Italian rapidly threaded his way toward the river, followed by Bory, Timmerman, and Raymond. Their course lay past Van Schendel's house, and Raymond stopped there, having an errand with the

burgher. Van Schendel was eagerly awaiting him, and so, it appeared, was Hubert.

Great was the boy's dismay and chagrin when his father exclaimed, "No, no, Hubert; thou canst not go from thy mother. There is no need of thee anywhere else, and she might be in some sore strait if left alone."

"But, father," groaned Hubert, "what could happen to her? At the worst the Spaniards could not take the city to-night. 'Tis—'tis *terrible* to stay with the women and children in a time like this."

"Wouldst thou leave thy mother unprotected in possible danger to satisfy thy curiosity?" asked his father sternly, adding, "My duty as a magistrate takes me from her, else would I stay."

Pitying the young fellow's natural disappointment, Raymond said, "Only the soldiers, Hubert, will be in a position to see anything, and not all of those. You could be but one of a crowd in the street. I will tell you a fine plan: Old Casper, the cathedral sacristan, considers your mother a woman above all praise by reason of her kindness to his lame Nick. If you beg him in her name, he will admit the mother,

Sophie and yourself to the cathedral tower. There can you see all."

"Think not I would have refused to stay had I thought it needful for her," said Hubert, less excitedly, "but—"

"But you would fain know all possible. Well, the tower is a grand place; hasten, lest many fill it first."

"Is it quite safe?" asked Van Schendel. "Might not the tower be shaken down?"

The sudden appearance of a company of soldiers around the corner prevented reply. The burgher and Raymond hastened to go their way, leaving Hubert rather crestfallen. He stood a few seconds pondering, then, hearing his mother's voice, he told her what Raymond advised. They called little Sophie and hastened forth into the streets, making their way to the cathedral. Old Casper had just before their arrival turned away a group of applicants by telling them that every nook and corner of the roof and tower was full of people and that no more could find a perch. Seeing Vrouw Van Schendel, he opened the door for her at once, and, closing it behind Hubert and Sophie, made it fast.

It was quite dark at the bottom of the tower,

for night had already fallen. Casper brought a light, and, showing them the way, invited them to climb. The ascent was fatiguing. Both the lady and the child were weak from lack of proper food, so they were many times obliged to rest before the six hundred and more steps were mounted.

When at last they emerged into the upper light and air, the change was so great it seemed as if it must be an hour earlier than when they entered the damp, dark passage below.

Hubert, going to the parapet, exclaimed, "Mother, come look down into the city. Hast ever seen an anthill broken open?"

"'Tis just the same," cried Sophie, peering down at the countless black bodies moving restlessly through every court, street and square. A moment after their eyes were turned beyond the roofs and towers of Antwerp, while faintly borne on the evening wind came the blare of trumpets and the beating of drums. From the cathedral top they could plainly see the shimmer of the wide water, the palisades, the forts and the ponderous bridge—that terrible, mysterious object they had scoffed at while it had grown under their very eyes. The fast-failing twilight

made smaller things indistinct, but it was still light enough to show on both sides of the river a vast array of soldiers all along the dykes, all across the bridge, mustering from every quarter, banners waving, spears and cuirasses gleaming.

There were two or three old men on the tower who knew Hubert to be the son of a magistrate and an acquaintance of Gianibelli's. They crowded about him now, asking questions.

"Dost know from thy father," asked one, "the plan of operations this night? We hear such wild rumors. Surely at this late hour thou canst betray no secrets best kept if we are told more than we now know."

"Of a truth not, Herr Geldorp: I can freely tell thee. So soon as it shall be dark Admiral Jacob Jacobzoon, who is near the Boor's Sconce (the fort by the city-walls), shall start every half hour eight 'hell-burners' until the fleet of thirty-two are gone with the ebb tide toward the bridge. The boats are covered with tar, turpentine, rosin and every combustible thing one can think of, and their object is to clear the way and busy the Spaniards until the great ships of Gianibelli come on to do the grand things he predicts."

"Ay, ay, the Fortune and the Hope," said old Geldorp. "We stake our all on them, but as for me, I wish Koppen Loppen had no hand in the matter."

"But this is the time for 'runaway Jacob' to get rid of his nickname and clear of the charge of cowardice," replied Hubert, referring to a recent occasion when the admiral had not behaved with bravery and had earned the title Hubert gave him.

"He deserves no second trial in times like these," muttered the old man. "The burgo-master said that but for Jacobzoon's folly the Spaniards would have fallen into our hands that day."

"We quote St. Aldegonde now," said a second old man, "but had we listened to our burgomaster months ago we would have been wiser. All winter long did he urge the Hollanders and Zeelanders to use the stormy moonless nights to destroy Parma's bridge while it was yet unfinished, but no well-planned attempt was ever made."

It was getting dark fast. They could see nothing below them but moving lights, twinkling everywhere like fireflies.

“How comes it,” asked Geldorp, “that all the Spanish forces are gathered as if they knew exactly what to expect?”

“Gianibelli said that the prince had learned something was under way, and no doubt he anticipates now an invasion by a fleet from Antwerp and a squadron of Zeelanders from below. The first ‘hell-burners’ are not to be lighted when they start. No doubt they have already started, for that was to be the trick that would call out the Spanish soldiers to the bridge, and before it grew dark thou knowest we saw the bridge black with them—no doubt with the flower of them, the prince and the generals.”

With talk like this the moments passed, and little Sophie, shivering as she wrapped herself in Vrouw Van Schendel’s skirts, wondered in her childish way what it all meant. If the Spaniards came from a far-away rich land, how foolish they were! People said they were almost as poor and had as little to eat now as the Antwerp folks; then why try so hard to get into a city where they would find so very little in the cupboards? This bridge—would Spaniards come over it if it were not torn down, or were they strange, horrible demons, half men, half

fiends, who could not cross water in boats, and therefore had fashioned the huge passage-way?

“What is the next thing to be done, my young friend?” again asked old Geldorp, keeping close to Hubert—“I mean after the fire-ships—dost thou know that?”

“Right well, for I have heard nothing else this last week. So soon as the fireships have done their work, Admiral Jacobzoon sends an eight-oared barge to see if there be any breach made in the bridge. If there is a passage opened to the city, he is to fire a rocket. At that very moment an armament and fleet stationed at Lillo will force its way to Antwerp, and they have food enough to comfort us and keep us content for days to come.”

“God grant our eyes shall see that rocket ere the dawn!” exclaimed the old man, and a subdued murmur of prayer echoed from all who listened. There was little said after that. All were eagerly watching for they scarcely knew what.

When Van Schendel and Raymond hastened on their way, each was bound for a different point—the burgher to a place where with his fellow-councilors he would await events, and

Raymond to the "Boor's Sconce," where on the edge of the river, with Gianibelli and St. Aldegonde the burgomaster, he was to be allowed the opportunity of seeing the success or failure of the strange war-vessels. But great as was the young man's faith in the genius of the Italian, his surest confidence was in his God. His lips moved in prayer as he hastened toward the fort, having parted with Van Schendel by the town-hall.

It was quite dark when he succeeded in getting to Gianibelli's side. Asking no questions, after one glance into his pale face and gleaming eyes he awaited what a few seconds later happened.

The first fleet of vessels had started down the river, watched by thousands of Spaniards eager to know its purpose—watched by as many Dutchmen as eager and almost as ignorant, not of the purpose of the fleet, but how that was to be accomplished. The vessels drifted here and drifted there, for no human hand guided them. The soldiers began to jeer when of a sudden the whole scene became a spectacle of unearthly splendor. Each ship was turned to flame! The Scheldt seemed on fire, its banks being so illu-

mined that the armed hosts appeared as in a mighty theatre, banners waving, weapons gleaming, men's faces strained with fear and wonder. The shouts of the soldiers, the tumult of the populace, the blast of trumpets, all were stilled.

But even as the Spaniards watched they took heart. If the intent was to burn the bridge, the means were not adequate. Burning vessels gliding about like luminous phantoms were strikingly picturesque, but only a mighty conflagration could destroy the magnificent monument of Alexander of Parma—this bridge on which now crowded the bravest of the Spanish army.

One by one the burning boats drifted apart and were slowly consumed, or, borne aside by the current, became entangled in a raft. Some grounded on the banks and others sank. Shouts of laughter came from the Spaniards on the palisades, the parapets and the unharmed bridge. Officers who had been secretly oppressed by fear of the unknown fell to jesting about the Antwerp fireworks gotten up for their entertainment.

To Admiral Jacobzoon, as has been said, was left the duty of dispatching the fleet, and great

was Gianibelli's chagrin when, instead of starting the vessels at regular intervals, Jacobzoon sent them all out, one after the other, helter-skelter. But, smothering his wrath, the Italian muttered, "A bad beginning may not be a bad ending. All the more depends on the two great vessels. Would Koppen Loppen were in the bottom of the sea ere aught of importance had been left to him!"

Scarcely had Gianibelli regained composure when Raymond exclaimed, "He has started the Fortune—ay, and the Hope as well."

The Italian sprang to a point far out on the fort, the Frenchman followed, and the one could almost hear the heart-beats of the other. Each was wild with enthusiasm, the one because an experiment on the grandest scale might be about to prove his genius and satisfy his hatred—the other because the liberties of a great city, perhaps the lives of its people, might that night be saved.

Darkness had taken the place of the spectacular glare. Only here and there a little space was lighted by the ruddy glow from a stranded ship. Not much heed was paid to the last stragglers until their larger size attracted atten-

tion. Small fires kindled on their decks barely sufficed to make visible their hulls. They carried pilots who as they neared the bridge escaped under cover of the darkness. Lumbering old craft they seemed, but stout hearts were needed to guide them even that distance, for each vessel was a volcano in whose crater were fourteen thousand pounds of gunpowder covered with stones, cannon-balls, marble slabs, chains, iron hooks, plough-coulters, and numberless strange projectiles. Both vessels looked as if their purpose was (like their forerunners') to fire the bridge by contact with it or its adjuncts. On the *Fortune* a slow-match was expected to explode the mine, while the *Hope* was to be regulated by a wonderful clock-work, which, striking fire from a flint, would inflame the mighty store of gunpowder beneath.

From the cathedral tower the assembled people had followed the course of events, and had been able to satisfy themselves that nothing of great moment had been done. Suddenly Hubert recalled his father's question, "Is it quite safe? Might not the tower be shaken down?"

Raymond had been swept on before he could reply, but a startled look on his face betrayed

that Van Schendel's question had suggested a possibility to be feared.

It cost the boy a great struggle, but he frankly told his mother what was in his mind, and bade Casper warn the rest. None of the men wished to go below, but Vrouw Van Schendel and Sophie were very weary. Hubert did not utter a protest when she leaned on him, saying, "Tonight the women of Antwerp can best help on their knees: I would gladly go home with thy assistance."

Sophie pattered after them down into the gloom. Hubert, who bore the feeble light, stopping now and then to let them rest, felt just a trifle uneasy at being shut in by the stone walls on every side, but nothing happened until the three were once more in the home, which seemed solemnly still in contrast with the streets thronged with anxious townsfolk.

During this time Herr Van Schendel had met his colleagues, and after a brief consultation with certain of them he left them and hastened to the fort, where he found Raymond, but not Gianibelli. In the excitement of the moment, when the two hell-burners started, the Italian had rushed away from the young man's side.

"Are they really under way?" exclaimed the burgher when he stood by Raymond in the place lately occupied by the "wizard."

"Can you not see them far yonder swaying with the current, the *Fortune* ahead?" cried Raymond; and then a breathless silence fell on every man about them as all tried to watch the foremost vessel slowly making its way.

"It goes not to the bridge," whispered one.

"See! see! how it staggers toward the dyke! how it lurches! It will ground near Kalloo," was the cry just after.

"Oh, can it be that the match will not do its work?" groaned Van Schendel.

"Or the whole plan of building be a failure?" gasped the Huguenot. They waited but a moment more, and then came a far-off faint explosion—a slight fire, and *the Fortune had failed.*

Words cannot tell the bitter disappointment that filled Van Schendel's heart as he cried out fiercely, "I thought Gianibelli knew what he planned! Hear, hear the Spaniards shout at the show we give them! Oh what child's sport is this?"

"There is one more chance," groaned Ray-

mond. "All is not ended till the Hope fail to do its work ;" but he spoke like one sick with dismay.

Clumsily, aimlessly drifted along the Italian's last vessel. The Spaniards gave no heed to it. A band of them had boarded the harmless Fortune and were exploring its secrets. But the mysterious clock-work in the Hope was acting far better than the slow-match had done. While one army was utterly disheartened, the other was fearless and joyous. Who cared for the wizard hidden in the darkness waiting, waiting?

The Hope neared its destination, tore its way along a raft and struck heavily against the bridge on the Kalloo side. There came a shout of laughter from the Spaniards and a rush of soldiers to board this last absurd old scow. They never reported what they found. There was an explosion like the rending of the heavens and earth. The boat, the soldiers, a great part of the bridge, and the troops upon it, vanished. The waters of the river rushed over the dykes into the forts—a thousand human beings were torn into atoms. All the air was filled with cannon-balls and slabs of granite. There was a lurid light one moment, and Egyptian darkness the next.

Van Schendel and Raymond were hurled to the ground and rendered almost senseless by the force with which they fell; the waves of the Scheldt rushed over them, and perhaps helped to bring them to their senses. When they staggered to their feet each one had the same impression that everybody else must have been killed and Antwerp itself annihilated. Soon, however, there were outcries and noise of men, soldiers shouting for lights, and shaking themselves like dogs crawling out of the water.

With the first lights kindled Raymond saw Gianibelli pale as death, but with eyes gleaming like coals of fire:

"Think you that has not made a breach in Alexander's bridge? Now will the admiral start the barge to make sure, and will send up the rocket for relief to come; and my Hope has saved Antwerp," he cried with a ring in his voice that thrilled every hearer.

"Nay, let us hope God has saved Antwerp, and that he judge us not sternly for this night's deed, for hundreds of souls sent to judgment all unprepared," returned Van Schendel solemnly; but little cared the Italian for aught save his success.

“Methinks King Philip himself might have heard even in the Escorial my salute to his majesty. And now let us go learn what is accomplished. Nay, that I know, for the bridge *must* be a ruin. Now let Antwerp get ready to receive the fleet, to feast and to rejoice.” So saying, back rushed Gianibelli to that point of the Boor’s Sconce, on the very edge of the river, where with St. Aldegonde the burgomaster he strained his eyes for the signal-rocket of the admiral.

In the city there was wild uproar of joy succeeding the brief awful confusion. Men everywhere guessed the truth (known for a certainty three days later), that the famous bridge was cleft through and through. They laughed and wept and fell on one another’s necks as they realized that just below them, awaiting the signal to start, was the friendly fleet laden with provisions for their starving wives and children—the fleet with sails spread, oars in the rowlocks. Their ears ached to catch the first thunder of the cannon turned against the foe.

That signal-rocket was never sent up!

Once more Admiral Jacobzoon by his imbecile conduct was to cover himself with shame,

and, what was infinitely, infinitely worse, bring ruin on Antwerp. All that night success, liberty, relief could have been had for the city. Gianibelli and the burgomaster (unable to tell what delayed the fleet or why the rocket was not fired) seemed frantic with rage and disappointment. Lying reports were started that the bridge was uninjured, and while the people of Antwerp believed these stories, the genius of the Spanish prince was wonderfully shown by his energy in action. Before daylight his soldiers had so patched up the ruin that it seemed far less serious than it really was, while his men began and carried on like magic the work of genuine restoration. When all the truth was known in Antwerp, the bitter disappointment seemed too great to be endured.

A few days later Jacob the dwarf, coming home, reported that a friend of his had gone under the bridge, had even been in Kalloo, and to him Jacob's father had told many details—how terrible had been the loss of life among the Spaniards, what great generals they had lost, and how easily Antwerp might have freed herself that night from foreign invasion. His report was made to Hubert, who would have

bidden him refrain from harrowing his father with the recital; but the burgher overheard, and called Jacob to him where he sat brooding by his hearthstone.

"What said they in Kalloo," asked Van Schendel, "of the mind of the Spaniards? and have they plenty of food?"

"They have plenty of nothing but of rags, of discontent and of hunger, according to the common soldiers, and yet my father says Alexander of Parma will never leave Antwerp until it surrenders or falls. He is the match for one like our dead prince."

"And our prince is dead indeed," groaned Van Schendel, murmuring to himself. "St. Aldegonde is no coward, but he holds not the heart of the people in his hand as did Father William."

"Of what will be the next talk?" asked the mother, who sat with idle hands, for work now seemed so purposeless.

"Bread-riots will come next," replied the burgher; "already hungry crowds dog the burgomaster's steps, yelling, 'Bread! bread or peace with Spain!'"

"Yes, and all the Catholics in Antwerp now echo the cry," said Hubert.

Heaving a mighty sigh, Jacob added, "My stomach is a Catholic; it has ever an amen to that prayer; but my head is Protestant, so I'll not go bawling after the burgomaster."

At the word "bread" little Sophie left her listless play with her wooden doll, and, coming eagerly to Van Schendel's side, stood a moment looking into his face. The troubled man did not read her thought, but kindly smoothed her hair. She opened her lips to ask if— Well, Jacob fancied it would be a question about food, and unseen he beckoned the child to his side and pointed kitchenward. When Sophie followed him into that almost painfully silent and spotless retreat, he drew from a cupboard part of his dinner. It was not quite as much or as palatable as Sophie had received in those sad days of her beggar-life, but it looked most delicious now.

"Sophie," remarked the dwarf with a benevolent leer and great plainness of expression, "the hunger in my belly is such that a mouthful like this makes it much worse: wouldn't you rather have no victuals at all than too little?"

"No-o," answered truthful Sophie.

"Then you may have this bite, and welcome."

"But don't you want it, surely?"

"I want to see you swallow it, and when you are too hungry to stand it run away from them," and he pointed to the family, "and only tell Jacob. He'll get you a bit if a bit is to be had."

"Oh, it is so good!" said the ravenous little creature, "and you are good. I would not have any home, Jacob, only you found me that night."

"What a supper we had when we got home here with you! I smell it now;" and the dwarf wistfully regarded the frying-pan as if he saw the old-time sausages; but, alas! their fragrance was only in his memory. All the vessels, big and little, in the room were clean and empty. Emptiest of all was Jacob's stomach.

CHAPTER VI.

ANTWERP'S FALL.

“Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.”

IT was a terrible and humiliating disappointment for men like Van Schendel to realize that when everything that human ingenuity could devise to save Antwerp had succeeded, the triumph had been snatched from them by pure carelessness. The councilors, almost beside themselves with rage, met again, and at this late day agreed that one faint hope remained.

The Kowenstyn Dyke, which they had refused to pierce when that action was urged as wise and feasible—that dyke, if it were possible now to pierce it, might be Antwerp's security. It must be attempted in the very face of Parma and against frightful odds, but if done the waters, now divided into two lakes, would flow together in one continuous sea; the Scheldt would probably return to its own channel and

leave the bridge high and dry, a useless toy, and intercourse between Antwerp, Holland and Zeeland would again be uninterrupted. The great bulwark was three miles long, and was strongly guarded by the Spaniards who had three forts on it and their whole besieging army in its neighborhood. A disastrous attack on it had already been made by the Zeelanders, but in the latter part of May another, more deliberately planned, was agreed upon by the men of Holland and of Antwerp.

Late one Saturday night two hundred ships from Zeeland, under cover of the darkness, stole up toward the Kowenstyn. Next morning, before the pale dawn and while the waning moon was yet in the sky, came other boats from Antwerp, some with soldiers, citizens and laborers, some laden with wool-sacks, sand-bags, hurdles, planks. Hohenlo and Justinus de Nassau from Zeeland came with brave men to fight, and provisions for the suffering city. St Aldegonde was there with English and Scotch troops, with men like Van Schendel, and with row-boats of sappers and miners, in whose picks and shovels lay the fate of Antwerp. With the Zeelanders were two men of whom the world

was to hear—the fair-haired Prince Maurice and John of Olden-Barneveldt. Among the humble laborers from Antwerp was as brave a boy as the prince, Hubert Van Schendel, and a stout-armed dwarf, Jacob his servant.

The sentinels upon the Kowenstyn did not at first see the fleet. As they looked away toward Lillo four fiery phantom ships came gliding toward the great dyke. Nothing else would have sent the shuddering Spaniards into their forts. The memory of that bursting volcano by the bridge made cowards of them for the moment. The vessels, covered with tar, pitch, rosin and gunpowder, served the purposes of huge torches, and in the glare of their lurid light there swarmed across the black water the great fleet of boats, big and little. The Zealanders sprang first upon the dyke, but found themselves in fierce encounter with the Spaniards, who had issued from the two forts between which the patriots had landed. The commander of the latter was hurled into the water and drowned in his heavy armor. The Spaniards were prevailing, when the Antwerp fleet came to the rescue on the other side. The burgomaster, cheering, was soon in the thickest of the fight,

and close behind him was Van Schendel. The whole combined force now effected their landing, and the fiercest contest of all that long war began. Three thousand men were almost face to face upon a strip of earth scarce six paces wide, with miles of deep sea on either hand.

Side by side, every man who could handle a pick or shovel better than pike or sword rushed at the iron-bound soil of the dyke and dug and delved. Hubert and Jacob worked like beavers. The boy never stopped when all about them the contest raged and men rolled dead into a grave which their own hands had just dug. Jacob ceased only once to watch his master and young Raymond fighting breast to breast with Spaniards. Each man was for himself with pike and pistol, sword or dagger. "Soldiers, citizens and all,—those men were like mad bull-dogs," wrote Parma to King Philip.

In Antwerp women and children were on their knees while on the dyke fathers and husbands fought for freedom from Spain's bondage. The cannon from the fort mingled its thunder with the cannon from the fleet. Patriots and Spaniards, closely packed, discharged

pistols in one another's face, or, wounded, rolled off the slimy dyke into the sea;—and the sappers and miners tore up the dyke. Everything depended on them, and for an hour or more they worked like Titans. Meanwhile the patriots gained on their foe. With great slaughter they drove them to the Palisade Fort on one side and to Fort George on the other. The centre of the great dyke Kowenstyn was at last theirs, and a mighty shout went up when the key to Antwerp was thus in their hand. The barrier was cut through and through. The salt water rushed like a river into the breach.

“See! oh see!” yelled Jacob, aroused as never before, at the sight of a Zeeland barge laden with good things to eat and sailing triumphantly through toward Antwerp.

“Thank God!” panted Van Schendel, thinking of Antwerp's liberties rather than of its larders. “Thank God, and I pray I may never see such another bloody Sabbath as this has dawned!”

“Nay, thank God for all the glory of it,” shouted the burgomaster, rushing forward to spring on the barge, that he might be among the first to carry the news of victory to Antwerp,

to set all the bonfires ablaze, to start all the bells pealing. Hohenlo went also.

"Well begun is not ended," said Van Schendel, resting from his fearful labors, for the Spanish batteries were silenced and the patriots now unmolested. "There is much yet to do. I fancy our Father William would have deferred the rejoicing until the forts were carried and the dyke destroyed."

"Ay; I go not back to Antwerp for a mouthful of bread until I make sure there is a loaf for the morrow," said a neighbor by his side; adding, "St. Aldegonde is a brave man and a genius, but ever in haste."

There was bitter rage among the Spaniards.

"Oh for one half hour of Alexander of Parma in the field!" sighed one of the commanding officers who was in council. But there was no lack of old heads and young heroes among the Spanish forces. New troops soon reached the garrison and attacked the besiegers.

The soldiers of the fort, cheered by the relief, made a vigorous sortie. Suddenly along the whole dyke ran the news that the prince of Parma had arrived.

Then came the real issue of the day. Already

the joy-bells of Antwerp were pealing. The boatload of food was displayed, and every storehouse door flew open to receive the supplies that would soon follow, and in the town-hall was hot haste made to spread a banquet for the glory-crowned heroes. Men cried for joy, and women hugged their children with rapturous promises of peace and plenty.

The prince inspired his troops with wild enthusiasm. He took in with rapidity the whole situation, made brief arrangements, went from rank to rank, saying, "The man who refuses to follow me cares not for honor nor holds dear God's cause and the king's."

No heroic leader played on the hearts of the patriots: proper leaders they just then lacked, but every man among them, before starting on that day's work, had vowed to destroy the dyke and relieve Antwerp or die in the attempt. Soon five thousand men were shut within that mile-long space between the forts, and again began a hand-to-hand conflict.

There was scarcely room for the dead to fall; the slimy ground was blood red. Comrades climbed on the bodies of comrades as they fought. It was not a battle, but a series of

countless duels. The horrible carnage went on an hour and a half. Then a strange delusion excited the Spaniards to new ardor. It was told that the ghost of a dead commander of the old Spanish Legion, Don Pedro Pacchi, was charging in front of his regiment.

Unhappily, some of the vessels of the patriots began at that moment to drift away from the dyke, and others, being disabled, must retreat or fall into the Spaniards' hands should they gain the day.

"We have conquered!" shouted the ever-ready prince of Parma. "The sea deserts the impious heretics."

A panic seized the patriots, and the day was lost!

Such a day as it had been to young Hubert! When the barge went through the dyke he had felt the wild joy of a schoolboy, had shouted, leaped and sung—had been wild to get back to Antwerp that he might help old Casper ring the cathedral bells, sore as were his arms. Then came the order to go on with the work of destruction, and he had obeyed, working with the busiest, so blackened with smoke, so begrimed with mud, that Jacob could not recognize him.

The fighting had been but just renewed when the rumor reached Hubert that the Spaniards were getting the better of the former victors, and that the real fight must now be not to destroy the dyke, but to get the forts. The shovel fell from his hands. In that instant he realized what defeat meant for Antwerp. He remembered the "Spanish Fury," that horrible, horrible nightmare of his childhood! Now he was able to realize what the Spaniards might do again. His mother was in Antwerp, and little Sophie, grown dear to him.

In that hour and place Hubert left his boyhood. He clambered out of the mud and lost no time in joining the fighters. After that he had but one thought—to do his utmost. Years after he could live over that horrible hour or two which at the time had seemed to him a delirium. By chance he came near Raymond, black and bloodstained, and again by his father, bleeding from a wound in his head, but, unconscious of everything perhaps in his terrible fight for what had been gained only to be lost, he joined the soldiers.

Then came the panic, and all was changed into a mad rush along the bloodstained dyke,

the fleeing army seeking to gain the boats, the Spaniards fighting them even in the water. Two thousand were slain or drowned in this retreat.

The Scotch and English troops from Antwerp were the last to yield their position, and only after great loss.

Van Schendel, wounded again in the side, would never have reached a boat alive had not Hubert, assisted by a townsman, dragged him off the dyke and into almost the only boat they could have escaped in. As it was, the fugitives just behind them were shot and a boatload in advance was sent to the bottom of the river.

Such a return to Antwerp!—to Antwerp where Hohenlo, the victor of the morning, was feasting with fair women and drinking to the success of the patriots! The silver goblet was in his hand, joy in his face, when strange cries arose in the streets. The doors opened, and the dead and dying were brought in, their ghastly wounds adding horror to the story of loss and defeat—the Spaniards held the dyke! Once more Antwerp's safety had been sacrificed to folly and criminal carelessness.

Vrouw Van Schendel had been greatly ex-

cited all that long Sunday afternoon, now with joy at what the public rejoicing betokened, now with fear at the thought that the victory had been bought with bloodshed and perhaps her dear ones were among the dead. If all was well with them, why were they not at home? Men told her the dyke was almost destroyed. She paced up and down the house; she stood long in the doorway searching the almost deserted streets for a sight of her husband or Hubert. She let Sophie follow her into the silent kitchen, and when the child questioned her of the bells all the time ringing, she tried to divert both herself and the little one with pictures of the feasts yet to be cooked in all those empty polished pots and stew-pans. To-morrow—yes, possibly to-night—they might have supper enough to satisfy them. One shipload of provisions had arrived, the neighbors told her. By and by the bells were still. From the not distant square came shouts. A man rushed past her door, cursing and crying for vengeance on— She should have thought he said Hohenlo and St Aldegonde, but had not these men helped to save the city? When all was still she went in, and little Sophie brought her a great bunch of yellow violets from the

garden. The child stood by the anxious woman, looking very pale, and listlessly asked if it were not strange that the flowers that God made never needed to eat, while children got hungry.

There was a sound of feet at the door. The violets flew from her skirts as the vrouw rushed to meet the incomer. She staggered back at the sight that met her, but never knew if she uttered a sound. A second after she was helping her almost powerless husband to stretch himself on the floor, while Hubert (yes, the blackened, bloodstained, mud-covered creature was Hubert) worked over the prostrate man, finding for the first time the extent of his wounds. In those terrible times women had learned to do all that could be done in the absence of the by no means easily-found surgeons. Van Schendel, although terribly exhausted from loss of blood and exertion, protested that his were only flesh wounds, which seemed probable, though one had a most ugly look. Hubert was scarcely able to speak, now that he had succeeded in getting his father home.

Vrouw Van Schendel brought out a bottle of old wine treasured heretofore as far more preci-

ous than gold, and gave them each a portion, soaking in it little cakes of the grain that was all their sustenance. Kind even in her anxiety, she fed little Sophie too when the child began to pick up the tiniest crumbs from the floor. Were they not to have relief soon? Had not her brave husband and her noble boy fought well for Antwerp's safety? She was soon undeceived. With the first strength given him by food the burgher groaned and lamented over the cruel end of the day that had begun so joyfully. The fall of Antwerp was only a matter of days, a mere question of how near starvation its citizens would come before surrendering to Alexander of Parma; and many were starving even now.

Sleep at last overpowered the two who had endured so great fatigues, and Vrouw Van Schendel was left to hours of harrowing thought. Once or twice she stood at her open window and listened to the howls of the angry, the wails of the heartbroken people, who now fully comprehended what had occurred.

About dark the dwarf crept in at the door, so spent that, like his master, he had hardly breath to tell the horrors he had seen.

Sophie knew of war only by hearsay, and now that all were once more at home, why were they so sad? "Will we not, then, have broth tomorrow?" she queried anxiously, but, getting no answer, did not ask again.

The next day Hubert, though stiff and lame, succeeded in getting a surgeon, who dressed the burgher's wounds. He declared they were not dangerous if inflammation did not set in, and he made a grim attempt at a jest about avoiding too rich or stimulating food. The day for jests had gone by.

The burgher, tossing on his couch, would groan, not with bodily pain, but in anguish of soul. Again for an hour he would be lost in despairing thought, and tears would flow down his cheeks, now pale and sunken. So day after day passed. The first day of June there was taken an account of grain, and it was declared to be half a pound for each person every day if the city held out two months and awaited heaven only knew what help. Perhaps England might come to the rescue.

Van Schendel's faith grew faint. In all the years past he had been one who felt that the Lord was on the side of the Netherlands, and the

devil himself the helper of Spain. Now, when he looked at his frail, white-faced wife and reflected that to hold out longer against the Spaniards meant starvation, while to surrender meant for women and children perhaps a fate a thousand times worse than death, he cried out, "O God, thy fierce wrath goeth over us; thy terrors have cut us off. Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction?"

In vain Van Schendel's brother-councilors urged him to make haste to recover, so that he might get back to their endless debates and wranglings over what might be done, when there was naught they could do.

In these days Louisa Van Schendel developed a faith that made her seem to Hubert like one inspired, and reminded the burgher of the traditional saints in whom he no longer believed. She was able to rise above the present season of awful suspense—able to trust God if Antwerp fell and they all were doomed to perish. Over and over she repeated to him the words of Christ about tribulation and sorrow; she bade

him give no more thought to those that could kill the body, but not the soul; especially she labored to show him that, though religious liberty should again be taken from Antwerp, the Lord was stronger than Philip of Spain. Right would triumph in the end. He listened and pondered her words. She was constantly with him, for the household duties were light; even little Sophie could serve the food, it was so scant, so pitiably scant.

Van Schendel's wounds healed slowly if at all; but he suffered little, seemed to have no fever, and Vrouw Van Schendel began to urge him to make exertion to get out again. He would not rouse himself even when she told him of the bread-riots and that the people were beseeching St. Aldegonde to give up the city without further resistance. He only replied, "I cannot advise. Let them do what seemeth least harmful."

One evening, toward the last of July, Giani-belli and Raymond came to see why the burgher did not mend faster. Raymond had himself been wounded, but was now almost recovered. They found Van Schendel propped up in his big chair, looking so sallow-white that

the change from his former ruddiness was startling. He seemed, too, lacking in all his old-time vehemence of speech, and he listened in silence when Raymond told him that the burgo-master was considering with the prince articles of capitulation.

Gianibelli after a little dropped all talk of public affairs, and with quite the manner of an experienced physician began to put questions to Vrouw Van Schendel and to the burgher about his condition. The Mantuan had considerable surgical skill, having studied medicine and surgery as he had studied something of all sciences. He carefully examined Van Schendel, and then with a casual remark that his wounds would not heal until he had more vitality, he turned the talk again to public affairs.

When the two men bade the burgher good-night and had left the room, they were detained at the door by the vrouw.

"What think you of my husband?" she asked the older man, and, seeing he hesitated an instant, she exclaimed, "*The truth!* I would have the *whole* truth. I like not some signs, some symptoms I have noticed."

"As what, madam?"

“Where is the other one in these days who craves not food, as he doth not? Once I might think he feigned, that the rest of us might have a larger portion; he hath done so in days gone, but now friends send him daily little hoarded dainties. He really cares not to eat, he— But what think you, Signor Gianibelli?”

“I fear that he faileth from poisoning of the blood, else why is there no healing of the wounds, but rather they worsen? He craveth no food; he is not nourished by that which he taketh. He was not in strength when hurt; since then he hath been as low in mind as in body: all work together.”

Vrouw Van Schendel laid her hand on her heart and stood as if she heard not the last words of her guest. When Raymond, who, having less knowledge than Gianibelli, could feel more hope, strove to speak cheeringly, she answered, “It cometh not on me all unexpected. For a week have I feared to hear such words. I have seen this blood-poisoning before now.”

“Louisa beloved!” called the burgher.

She went back and sat by his side, holding his hand, which was almost as delicate as her own.

“Louisa, Gianibelli hath given me great comfort.”

“Wherein, dear husband?”

“He hath shown me clear proofs that if the city surrender—and it must—the prince of Parma will never deal with the people as Duke Alva dealt. Gianibelli hates a Spaniard, and would say naught without reason in praise of one. He declareth that the outrage, the horror of Naarden and Haarlem will not be repeated. I know not how he telleth, but he avows that all heretics will be allowed two years in which to close up their affairs and leave Antwerp, unless they conform to the Church of Rome.”

“Then let us not be wholly cast down. We can seek refuge in England.”

“A strange new peace filleth my soul, Louisa. I had it, in part, before the Mantuan came, but the fear of what might happen to the bodies of my dear ones ever troubled me. Now that he has eased me of that I am quiet in my soul. Religious freedom seemeth dead in the Netherlands, but God is not dead, my Louisa, and no prince can banish his love from the heart of his own people. It hath of late been shown me

that I have not loved my Saviour as I have hated his enemies. I have forgotten that God hath more days than this evil day for Antwerp in his great book of time. I believed he needed me to fight, to suffer, to die for Antwerp. I know now he wanted only my poor broken heart."

Vrouw Van Schendel was softly weeping at the tender tones of the once-strong man by her side. He put his arm out and held her close, saying, "Louisa, I shall not need two years to end my doings in Antwerp. I shall enter a free city where God alone reigneth, and that soon. If matters haste not, I shall not even know when Antwerp falls at Alexander's feet. I shall stand in the great city, the Holy Jerusalem, into which never entereth anything that defileth."

He expected a terrible outburst of grief, such as he had vainly tried to assuage when little Elizabeth died, but Louisa only clung to him, weeping softly. He did not know the comfort she had in believing that she would soon follow him. When he should be gone the mainspring of her life would be broken. Care and famine had already reduced her bodily

strength, so that she would have no power of recuperation.

They sat for a long time talking of the days of their courtship and early marriage. The moon came up and filled the room with a mystical beauty. They were lifted out of the present and seemed to have a revelation of the life and joy to come. Spiritual things became gloriously real to these two who were but lightly clothed upon with their earthly garments of flesh, and whose souls were the temples of the Holy Spirit.

A few days more and it was evident to all that the burgher's end was near. The day it was made known that Antwerp had yielded meekly to Philip of Spain he heard it talked of, but gave no heed. His voice, hearing and sight began to fail; he only whispered a word or two of prayer or the name "Louisa"—sometimes, "My son," and again, if Sophie kissed his feeble hand, he would murmur, "Elizabeth." He died so quietly they did not know the moment of his death.

Then Vrouw Van Schendel's terrible grief came like the storm after the calm. She refused to leave the bedside, and was only

quieted when Hubert consented, against his judgment, to let the body stay in the house until the days of public so-called rejoicing were ended.

The prince made his triumphal entrance into Antwerp with gorgeous display, processions, torchlight exhibitions, music and merrymaking—a bitter season to many brave hearts, but, thanks be to Heaven! not a time of bloodshed and horror. All through those hours of bell-ringing and cannon-firing the inmates of the once bright home of the Van Schendels moved softly, as if fearing to disturb the lifeless master and the stricken mistress. Raymond, who also had lost a noble father, tried to speak some comfort to Hubert, but no one could do more for Vrouw Van Schendel than urge her to taste a bit of bread or a sup of wine.

On the evening of the third day she aroused and spoke lovingly to Hubert, stroked Sophie's soft hair, and once said earnestly to Raymond, "God be with thee, Louis! If my husband was a friend to thee, be thou like a brother to his son and mine."

"I will indeed, dear lady. Let me be to thee another son, and strive to do for thee in days to come."

With a smile that illumined her features with an almost unearthly light she echoed, "days to come."

Raymond feared her mind might be giving way, and urged Hubert to get her to rest. She consented to go with little Sophie, and Hubert saw her within the chamber door before he kissed her good-night.

They found her at sunrise the next morning close to her husband, her hands folded--quite dead.

CHAPTER VII.

A NEW HOME.

IT was three in the afternoon, and all Madame Bercier's domestic tasks were done. It is doubtful, however, if the bright-eyed little mistress of the new home thought that anything connected with her present dwelling was a task. This day, as she took her sewing and seated herself in the doorway, she seemed so comfortable in mind and body that the sleek yellow cat came purring to curl at her feet in peaceful slumber. For the first time in years the pastor's wife had no anxieties.

Their journey in the early summer had been very long and irksome, but happily was void of perils. When they reached Canterbury they found that Huguenot friends had already chosen a house for them. It was a cottage on the old road along which the pilgrims used to travel from London to à Becket's shrine—a neat, commodious house of oaken beams and plaster. Knowing that the good pastor could bring with

him nothing but such articles as were easily transported, these same friends had vied with one another to provide him with stout oak chairs, tables, beds and chests. Madame Bercier's satisfaction at the sight of them is indescribable. While the pastor was going from house to house discoursing of spiritual matters and the state of affairs in France, while Jeanne and Marie cared most for the sunshine, the wild flowers and the sweet summer days outside the cottage, madame flew from closet to parlor, from kitchen to porch. Never did the rest of that happy family well understand how madame herself managed to bring from France so many treasures as came to light.

So it was that on this September afternoon the cottage was supplied with all that English ideas of comfort required, while it was made dainty with devices known only in France. Madame sewed with pleasant reflections on the goodly store of linen in her chests. She could not resist admiring glances at the dresser, where, by the side of honest English pottery, gleamed bright bits of silver from the chateau. She was not so practical in her tastes, however, that she could not delight in the big flower-pots

Marie had put here and thereabout, and greatly was she charmed with what she saw outside her doors. The cottage was on a slight elevation overlooking the city, plainly showing the three great towers and vast front of the magnificent cathedral. All about were fields carpeted with daisies, winding lanes between hedgerows, natural groves of grand old trees, and everywhere views of as fair a country as ever they had seen in France.

Jeanne and Marie were too young to find occasion for overmuch joy in household goods; they cared more for the pretty garden behind the cottage. This garden was full of herbs, of fruit trees, berries and a medley of all varieties of flowers sweet in perfume and brilliant in color.

The pastor's family had now been several weeks established in their new home. His heart was cheered as he went among his old friends or learned to know new ones. He found what for that day was considered entire liberty in matters of religion. No Huguenot in Canterbury lived in terror of his life. Then, too, all were sure of a comfortable maintenance if willing to work for it. Indeed, none of them suf-

ferred from the home-sickness usual to dwellers in a strange land. Each heard his native tongue spoken, and could find his own people living in the French manner, though surrounded by English folk. Jeanne and Marie were likely to have more young companions than ever they had had at home. Change of scene and occupation had been good for both girls. Jeanne was the only one who had many lonely hours, for not one word had she heard from her brother. Letters had all gone astray. The day they left France one letter (very brief and so written that officials might read and find no treason therein) had reached Jeanne, telling her that her brother Louis was well and with kind friends. Since then not a word had been received.

Madame Bercier was in deep thought planning a vegetable garden that she would surely have planted as early in the spring as might be. Suddenly some one spoke her name, and a man appeared close by her side. She sprang up in surprise that was half alarm, then, gazing into the new comer's face, exclaimed, "Is it? God be praised, it is Louis Raymond! But how thou hast changed! Thou wast scarce older than my

Bertrand when we saw thee set forth; when and whence hast thou come? Oh, what joy for Jeanne!"

"Tell me of her, dear madame. My heart would be broken but for knowing she lives. Thou canst well picture what a home-coming I had last month. I was wild with delight at the thought of surprising the mother and dear ones. I rode into the village at the twilight, and marvelled much to see no light, no stir, in or about the chateau. When I found it empty, I wonder I fell not senseless on the doorstone; for, remembering my father, I had but one sick horror of soul, believing all were dead—slain."

"No, no, poor Louis! God has smitten thee, but it was with a loving hand and not by man's cruelty. Thy dear mother and thy good aunt died peacefully in their beds."

"So was it told me by the neighbors, and I could almost be reconciled to my loss in the first relief of knowing they had not all been butchered; but the chateau, my heritage, the home of the Raymonds for two hundred years, Madame Bercier?"

"Will belong to the Raymonds no more; but, Louis, my husband would say that we are

strangers and pilgrims in a glorious company, some of whom are gone on to the better country, to the city God hath prepared. What matter if we are cast out of France, if God is not ashamed to be called our God—above all, if he gives us safe refuge even this side of heaven?”

“Truly, the good pastor was ever a saint. Still, the chateau was *mine*, and while we are on earth we—or I do—cling to what we claim as our right.”

“Thou sayest what I feel. I am not so lifted above the world as the pastor. I know too that 'tis easy for me to speak cheeringly, seeing I have here in England a better portion than ever I had at home. Nevertheless, by my own worldliness can I better measure thy grief at losing thy lands and the goodly dwelling,” said the honest-hearted madame.

“Jeanne, my sister, all that is left me save little Marie the cousin—where is Jeanne?”

“Well, and longing for thee. The day being so beautiful, they went for a ramble. The way I cannot tell, but soon we shall see them again. Hast thou eaten? Shall I not get thee food?”

“Not so, madame. I dined well in the town when once I had learned all was well with thee

and with Jeanne. How kind, dear friend, hast thou been to my poor unprotected girls! But for the pastor and thee what had they done?"

"Nay, Louis, we have but made our home bright with young life. I ever wanted daughters, and now am I rich."

For a little longer they talked, and then madame, seeing the wistful looks the young man cast up and down the highway, exclaimed, "I have reason to think that Jeanne and Marie took yonder path across the fields to the road leading to an old, old church on a hill. If thou likest, go seek them."

Louis at once availed himself of the permission to leave the madame, glad as he had been to see her familiar face. He hastened across the fields, feeling lighter-hearted than he had for weeks. Deeply as he grieved for his mother, it was sweet to know that she was for ever out of the reach of the terror and lawlessness of the times. If he had no lands to call his own, the world was wide. He was young and Jeanne was safe. Dear Jeanne! She was to be all in all now to him. After months of excitement, danger, and sadness following hope, it was soothing to have leisure to note how blue was

the sky, how soft the verdure of hillside and valley, how peaceful this fair English land. He had so lately seen human beings gaunt with famine, desperate with the fortunes of war, it was delightful to meet fat and rosy children playing by the roadside cottages, to pass men with hopeful faces, comely dames with contented mien, and last, but not least, sleek, well-fed cattle. He went lightly along the beaten path, followed by many curious glances from the rustics whom he passed. They knew that this tall, olive-skinned and handsome stranger was no English yeoman. Soon he saw above him a little old square church, half hidden in foliage and surrounded by a churchyard, and, if his eyes did not deceive him, he saw a maiden who might be Jeanne. Little he cared, if he knew, that this was the oldest church in the land, the one built for St. Augustine, who brought Christianity to England. He hurried on faster and faster. He came up the little path toward the front of the church and saw Jeanne plainly. She was leaning on an old stone looking away to the not far distant but unseen ocean, thinking perhaps of him. The sun fell on her beautiful uncovered hair and her glow-

ing southern face. In contrast with the Dutch type of womanhood she seemed to Louis, as she really was, most rarely lovely. He feared to come upon her too abruptly. Hiding behind a great bush, he began singing their mother's favorite even-song. At the first sweet minor strain Jeanne sprung from the stone, reached out both hands, and cried, "*Oh, ma mère, ma mère!—Louis, mon frère!*"

In a moment more he had her in his arms, sobbing on his breast. When the first joy of meeting had calmed into more quiet delight the brother and sister seated themselves on a mound in the sunshine to talk of all that had gone on in the old home. They forgot Marie, who had strolled away with Bertrand. They went over, together, every day before the mother's death, every hour of her illness, and all that had occurred since that time. Louis told nothing of his own experiences, saying only that these could be told at any time. Now all his thoughts were of France. They talked at first with many sobs, with tear-stained cheeks, but, growing calmer, Jeanne narrated the later events of their journey, and Louis was glad to learn how pleasant they had found England, how fondly the

orphan girls had been cherished by the old pastor and his wife.

"Thou art changed, little one," said Louis, holding fast Jeanne's hand. It was so good to have some one he might love and caress! "I find thee wondrously like that picture of the grand dame our great-aunt who was called a court beauty, but, thank God, thou art far from any court, my little Huguenot sister."

"Little I no longer am," laughed Jeanne, blushing not from vanity as much as from maidenly pleasure that her brother found her sweet in his eyes. "Thou shouldst see dear little Marie," she added. "Her cheeks are as rosy as cherries, her eyes as blue as any English maid's, and she groweth so fast that Madame Bercier saith that one gown is scarce made for her before she hath outgrown it quite."

"Roses Marie had ever in her cheeks, and brambles many and sharp in her temper, but a good kind heart."

"That she has. The sweetness is for all save Bertrand; he getteth the brambles. He is meek and ever courteous, so Marie teaseth him without mercy," said Jeanne, looking down the hill, wondering where her late companions were.

“Bertrand? I forget him. Had he a fair girlish face, somewhat too pretty for a boy?”

“He had, and still hath, a fair face, but lacketh not spirit. He careth most for books, for old pictures, and studying of old buildings like the cathedral yonder. I think he must turn out a far greater scholar than the pastor himself. He careth no more for young men’s sports than doth Pastor Bercier himself, yet he is oft very merry.”

Jeanne had but spoken when from around the church came a tall lad with a pale face, followed by Marie, who stared in astonishment at Louis sitting by Jeanne’s side. She rushed at him when once he said, “Marie, dost thou not know me?” and her welcome was of the heartiest. Bertrand naturally remembered young Raymond well. The little Bercier had greatly admired him in the days when Louis had been the young master at the chateau. He had followed him with a boy’s longing when the young man rode forth from the quiet hamlet like a knight in quest of adventures.

“Where has the time gone?” cried Jeanne. “I thought it early, and here ’tis sunset!”

Surely; let us hasten,” said Louis. “’Tis to

treat Mère Bercier discourteously to leave her so long, and I have seen friends of hers who sent messages."

"Oh, thou hast indeed seen our village since we have!" exclaimed Bertrand, asking many questions. In this occupation he was greatly helped by Marie, who would know of everything, even the fate of the kittens left behind. Jeanne, happy enough to be silent for a time, went down the pathway hand in hand with Louis.

It was dark when they reached home, and the air very keen, but Mère Bercier had a warm welcome. A brisk fire leaped and crackled in the deep fireplace. Bright red curtains were drawn before the diamond window-panes, and she had prepared a little feast in honor of their guest. Pastor Bercier embraced the young man as if he were a son, and tears filled young Raymond's eyes when he remembered that the gentle old man had stood by his dying mother, had laid her in her peaceful grave. Madame was a famous cook, and full justice was done to her good things before the little group gathered about the hearth to hear Louis tell his story. It was almost midnight when the hostess thought

to send them to bed. They had learned for the first time of all that was doing in the Netherlands. The pastor was most deeply interested in the religious aspect of public affairs, but the madame and the girls could not hear enough of the once bright home of the Van Schendels, now desolate. Jeanne, who had lost home and mother, felt as if Hubert were a brother; Marie wept in sympathy for little Sophie; and the refugee pastor knew what the burgher had suffered in knowing that liberty of conscience was lost to his native land. The story of the fire-ships, of the siege, the piercing of the dyke, the premature rejoicing—how all thrilled them! They wept together at the recital of poor Vrouw Van Schendel's patience, her slow starvation, and death of a broken heart.

"What has become of Hubert and little Sophie and the good servant Jacob?" eagerly asked Marie.

"Soon after his parents were buried in one grave," replied Raymond, "Hubert took little Sophie to a relative of his in Leyden. He loves the child for her own sake, and more even because his father and mother petted her to the last. She wept sore and clung first to him and

then to me, begging us to keep her. It was plainly impossible. Hubert assured her a thousand times that she was his dear little sister and he would never desert her. She is with a fine old gentlewoman, who will be kind and teach her what she ought to know. Hubert, fortunately, has means to provide for her. Van Schendel, knowing that he might at any time have to flee from Antwerp, invested funds elsewhere to provide for his family should the worst come to him or to his city. Hubert himself, when he has disposed of the property in Antwerp, will leave that city. I should not be in the least surprised if he came to England. He may join the English army to fight for the Netherlands, or, if all is lost there, he will fight with me in France."

"With you?" cried Jeanne.

"With the Huguenots under Henry of Navarre," replied Louis with kindling eye.

Jeanne sighed, but it was to be expected: then the pastor and Louis talked long of the latest news from France. As did almost every Huguenot at that time, Louis idolized Henry of Navarre, believing him to be the bravest, most incorruptible prince in Christendom, the

greatest of military geniuses, the most loyal to the true faith. If old men like Pastor Bercier ever wondered what he might do should there come to Henry the choice between the crown of France and the religion he professed, young men like Raymond had no fears. He would never desert the Huguenots; he was their champion, their Greatheart.

Raymond became so eloquent in the praises of his prince that little Marie loudly bewailed that she was "only a girl," and could never fight under the banner of this dauntless hero of the white plume. She turned on Bertrand as they sat together on the oak settle in the fireplace, saying in a low voice and with unusual earnestness, "It seemeth to me very strange that thou art not eager to be a soldier."

"All men cannot be fighters," said Bertrand.

"Cowards cannot be," quoth Marie with the little ruffled-up air of a quarrelsome bird.

The youth looked at her without a trace of vexation in his clear eyes; then a thoughtful shade fell on his singularly innocent face.

"I wonder so much," he said, half to himself, "how during all the past years of war and bloodshed men have found time to do beautiful,

peaceful work and to study how to make themselves and others good. Soldiers never could have built the beautiful cathedral here in Canterbury—such fine lace-work in stone, Marie, as I found to-day; and men praised God that way by making his temple beautiful. Then the learned men I see there in the rooms where they keep the rare books and manuscripts. I would rather know what they know than run a sword into another human being with flesh and blood like my own.”

“But if thou wert fighting for religion?” argued Marie, amazed at such perversity of opinion.

“Father talks and acts as if religion was loving God and all his creatures. If I did not love my own father, dost thou think I should begin if Raymond were to half kill me, mangle me, and tear off my arms and legs?”

“But men must fight or wicked people will rule,” Marie returned, for if but a child she was not dull.

“Wicked people ruled when Jesus Christ was on earth, but he did not tell his disciples to fight.”

“Then thou thinkest it wrong for my brave

cousin to help our noble prince save France from such horrors as St. Bartholomew's day?"

"I am not thinking now or ever what is wrong for *some other man*, for it taketh all my time and my wit to learn what is right for myself," replied the young fellow very simply. "It may be I am stupid, but I have no call to bloody battlefields."

Marie gazed at him in a puzzled way, not, as usual, mocking. After taking notice, as if for the first time, of the clear beauty of his girlish face, flushing now in the firelight, she remarked, "It is well perhaps, for thou hast no look of one who could fight long or fiercely. I make no doubt thou wilt be a good man, if not a brave one."

"Can only fighters be brave, little one?"

Before Marie could answer Mère Bercier sent all to bed.

The days that followed Louis' coming were the happiest the little circle had known for a long time. Madame Bercier had the pleasant charge of her new bright house. The good pastor went about his visitations of the poor or the sick with a heart untroubled by fear of coming evil. Every Sunday his faithful Chris-

tian friends met for service, protected by Protestant power.

Louis, now that he was, after so long a time, again in a happy domestic band free from want and troubles of war, was fain to rest a while. Jeanne and Marie made much of him. With him they explored every corner of the quaint city, all the exquisite haunts in and about the cathedral. They roamed the woods and took him for long rural wanderings. Sometimes, in the warm fragrant recesses of a forest silent save for the note of bird or the low of distant cattle, Louis would wonder if that fearful scene of carnage on the dyke was not a nightmare—if the summer sunshine was not shining into the Van Schendel dining-room—if the calm-faced vrouw was not sewing, with Sophie at play—if Jacob and Dorothy were not jesting together over the shining pans and kettles—if the burgher, hale and smiling, was not chatting with some neighbor. In the mean time Louis was impatiently waiting some news from Hubert.

CHAPTER VIII.

LEFT IN LEYDEN.

LIFE had gone hard with the dwarf. No one grieved more sincerely for the Van Schendels than he. When the home was broken up he would gladly have followed Hubert's fortunes as his faithful squire. But poor Vrouw Kiesling was then a widow, and by the changes of the times left utterly destitute, ill and discouraged. The dwarf cared for her as best he could, and with a heart whose heaviness Hubert never appreciated saw his young master depart for England. Hubert had not supposed Jacob capable of much devotion or any enthusiasm. He had been gone nearly a year when Vrouw Kiesling died and Jacob was free to go where he would. He resolved at once to follow Hubert.

No one in Antwerp seemed to know where the young man could be found, but it occurred to Jacob that if he could find Sophie, she would

be able to tell him of Hubert's whereabouts. He had no idea where, in Leyden, Sophie had gone, but believing it could not be very hard to trace her, he went thither. For a fortnight he watched every yellow-haired child he passed, went from church to church, questioned children at play in the streets about Sophie, but all in vain.

One day he was loitering at a street-corner near the market-place, gazing with half-open mouth at passers-by who took him for a fool. His dull eyes seemed not to see either people or things. Nevertheless, he saw all—the comfortable old burghers, the students on their way to college, even the little brown birds flitting in and out among the gables of the picturesque old buildings around the market-place. Suddenly he sped across the square after a child who had just turned into one of the sleepy old streets where lived many wealthy inhabitants. The little girl lingered, looking up between the lime tree branches, and Jacob soon overtook her. His uneven, clumping step made her turn. “Jacob!” she cried out as he exclaimed “Sophie!”

She caught his great dirty paws in her soft

little hands, her face all aglow with delight. Her joy surprised the dwarf, who stood looking her well over before he heeded her talk. She was taller and had regained the plumpness natural to her age. She was very pretty, with something sweet and appealing in her clear blue eyes. The dwarf in his slow way studied carefully her attire. It was clean, but old and almost like a servant's. Her friends must be poor, he thought.

"Sophie," he said, "I have watched for thee as a cat for a mouse. Where is Hubert?"

"Oh, Jacob, knowest *thou* not?"

All the joy faded from her face. She seemed about to burst into tears.

"No: I want to follow him. I thought surely thou couldst tell which way I must needs go. Come, sit here on this church-step and tell me all thou canst, and how it goes with thee. Thou hast a dinner these days, or thy cheeks would be hollow."

"Oh, Jacob, I have dinners, but I was happier starving in Antwerp. After dear Vrouw Van Schendel died and the strangers took our house, Hubert said he must go away to be a good man and do the work his father would want done.

He said I was his own little sister, and some day, when he had a home, I might live with his wife. He brought me here to a good lady. She was very fat, not sweet like Vrouw Van Schendel, but with hair on her face almost like a man. The house was very grand. I was lonesome, but the lady was kind; only I had nothing to do but play with her dog. Hubert went away after he told me the lady would be good to me. I saw him give her money and heard him tell her that I was to have the same things that his sister Elizabeth would have had. Then he kissed me, and I cried to go with him. He cried also—canst thou believe *that*, Jacob? He told Vrouw Menin (that was her name) about his mother, and said she was like my own. Then he went away.”

“But *where*, child? Did he not say more of the place he would go to first and at what he would work, as you call it?”

“He said he would return to Antwerp, and then go in a boat to England—to that place where—London they call it—dear Monsieur Raymond went also.”

“But thou hast still a good home, Sophie?” said Jacob as the little girl suddenly wrung her hands.

“Oh, Jacob, that is the dreadful thing, that I can’t tell Hubert; and what if he never comes back? When he had been gone a few weeks, and I was almost happy in the garden with the dog, one day at dinner Vrouw Menin fell dead out of her chair. New people came then to the house and said it belonged to them. They treated me as if I were an ugly cat. They asked me what I was doing there, and where I came from. One night I told the new lady—(she is big and wooden-looking, like the images in churches, and wears many rings and a great head-dress),—I told her how thou found’st me long ago in the streets. She pushed me away, and all the rest looked black at me. They called me a beggar. Next day the new servants said I might better go into the streets again as I was that time in Antwerp. They would not let me eat with them nor stay in the room that I had slept in. I was afraid to go away, for where could Hubert find me? And oh, Jacob, how dreadful it was!—worse, much worse, than when we were so hungry in Antwerp. Then, when Vrouw Van Schendel kissed me, I felt warmed and as if I had eaten. The new servants let me have what they do not want after meals, and

one of them said I might sleep in a little place where the rats frighten me nights."

"And thou livest there still?"

"I had to stay, but now I work when the servants ask me. I run to the shops for them. I never play. No one is good and loves me. See, my clothes are wearing out, and the servants laugh when I ask how to get more. I pray to God to send Hubert for me, but Hubert never comes."

Jacob listened with real sympathy, but gave no evidence of it as he sat musing after the child ceased talking.

"If we knew where Monsieur Raymond had gone," said Sophie pensively, "we might find out about Hubert, for he told me he should find him first of all."

"Ho! he did say that!" exclaimed Jacob. "Well, one told me but last week that the Frenchman had gone to a town in England where many Huguenots go. I forget the name, but can easily learn it."

Jacob was not very much wiser about geographical matters than Sophie, but both knew that the sending of a letter and the waiting for its answer was an undertaking most likely to

come to naught and sure to take weeks, probably months, for anything they knew to the contrary. But if Sophie could not help him, Jacob might help her. He resolved to go home with her to tell the people sheltering her that she was not friendless nor a pauper. If they knew all, she would be differently treated. He explained this to the child, who gladly led him to one of the most pretentious dwellings in the street. They disappeared within the handsome entrance, and remained in the house a quarter of an hour. At the end of that time both reappeared, Jacob with a puzzled expression on his usually stupid face, Sophie looking half frightened, half pleased.

The dwarf muttered something about returning to the church-porch to think, and Sophie followed. He seated himself and with much inward disturbance and outward contortion reflected that he had blundered in seeking to help Sophie. The arrogant mistress of the house had questioned him, and learned that Sophie had no relatives, but depended on Hubert's bounty. She professed to believe that Hubert had left her as a dependent on Vrouw Menin. The latter was dead, and her heirs-at-

law had no intention of adopting stray orphans or outcasts for her sake. If Jacob knew Sophie, let him care for her himself. So, before the dwarf could protest, the mistress of the house had ordered her servants to "turn out together, once and for ever, the fool and the beggar."

Sophie went almost gleefully, for Jacob was to her a being as kindhearted as he was ill-favored. He would know what to do with her, she argued. But Jacob was at his wits'-ends. He did not know a single friend of the Van Schendels here or in Antwerp to whom he could take Sophie. Their well-to-do Protestant friends had removed from the city after it returned to the faith of Rome. He knew that Hubert loved the child. She was associated with the last two years of his mother's life. She was to him another little sister in place of his own. Jacob turned and looked at Sophie again. She was very innocent and childish, but she was twelve now, and fast growing a tall, beautiful girl. To let her be unprotected in those lawless times, to leave her to strangers,—Jacob knew the wickedness of a world he had lived in a quarter of a century. She must stay with him until he could find a protection for her that he could

trust. They were ill-assorted companions, but, dwarf as he was, Jacob had strength not to be trifled with. Better still, in his ugly body was a clean soul with as pure thoughts of kindness toward this pet of his departed mistress as any woman could have had.

“Jacob,” said Sophie at last, “what is it that troubles thee? I will be very good if only we can go straight to England. If we cannot find Hubert, we might find Cousin Raymond (he said I might call him that), and I could live with his people.”

Jacob stared at her, then at the architecture of the houses opposite.

“I have money enough to get to Rotterdam. By boat I think we might sail to Dover, and I have surely heard that this place where are many Huguenots is near Dover. Once I hear the name again, I shall always remember it. We can talk no English, but I can make shift to buy and to bargain in French, even if Raymond used to call it a Dutch sort—this French I have picked up in Antwerp.”

Jacob was apparently talking to himself, but again Sophie caught firm hold of his big hand, crying with great gladness, “Oh, how good thou

art, dear Jacob! How happy I am! I could dance and sing."

Jacob grinned. He was not demonstrative. He sat a long time thinking before he sent Sophie to buy something for their noontide meal. They ate it on the church-steps, scattering their crumbs to the birds. Then Jacob, who had more religious faith than he cared to confess, sent Sophie into the silent church to pray for success before they started on their uncertain journey.

Early in the afternoon they set out for Rotterdam. Sophie was a brisk walker, and she felt as if out for a joyful holiday. It was summer, and the country, flat, uninteresting, and poverty-stricken, was yet beautiful to the child. How could it be otherwise when wild flowers filled the grass, birds sang, and the sky was sunny? They rested at night in the cottage of a kindly peasant, who sold them food for the next day, and quite too soon for Sophie they reached Rotterdam.

For two days Jacob haunted the wharves before he could find any vessel going to England on which he could get a place for himself and the child. At last, after helping to load a

boat and thus showing his strength and willingness to work, Jacob was able to provide for his own passage and pay for Sophie's. The crew were all Dutch, but some of the roughest were fathers, and after hearing Sophie's story they were very kind to her.

But what terrible days those were to her! The food was very coarse, the vessel dirty. The vile odors alone would have been enough to sicken any one but a sailor, even if the ocean had been calm. But there came up a long storm, and the old boat was pitched about most frightfully. Many times Sophie, cold, wet, and fainting, wished that she had died in Antwerp with her adopted mother. Jacob did his best for her. When not at work he tried to tempt her to eat. He made a hammock for her in the cleanest place to be found. When she was weakest he carried her in his ungainly, great arms, and told her weird legends and wonderful hobgoblin tales to take her thoughts off her troubles.

The winds were fierce and long continued. The boat was driven much farther south than she should have gone. When at last they came to land once more, they were nearer London

than they were to Canterbury, so they made their way first to the great city. How astonishing the street sights were to Sophie, and not much less so to Jacob! Antwerp seemed a dull place in comparison. A countryman on the boat had told Jacob of a Dutch lodging-house where they found their first shelter. There were certain friendly people in it who wondered much over the child and the dwarf, and Jacob, seeing they knew more of England than he, asked their advice. His small stock of money was very nearly exhausted. To wander about with Sophie, like a couple of vagrants, was to subject her to great hardship. Indeed, she was just then very frail from what she had already endured. The woman of the house, a decent body, counseled Jacob to let Sophie rest for a month or two while he sought work down at the docks. He knew all about mending and even building boats, that having been his father's trade. In the mean time there might be found some one going to Canterbury who could inquire among the Huguenots for a Frenchman by the name of Raymond or a Dutchman called Van Schendel. Jacob had never heard *why* either of the two had any interest in going

to Canterbury, never having heard of Pastor Bercier or of Raymond's family.

Accordingly, Jacob sought and found work enough to keep himself and his charge, though it was in the humblest way. Sophie saw poverty of the cleanly sort, but was contented. Bette Broeck never abused her, and sometimes Katrina, the landlady's fat and stupid daughter, let Sophie go sightseeing with her. The child began to learn self-reliance, and before long she became very happy and actually seemed to grow an inch every night. Jacob was vaguely puzzled after a time. What would he do with a tall, beautiful young girl on his hands? She looked already out of keeping with everything and everybody about her, like a white rosebud on a pile of dirty turnips, as he rather practically reflected.

After a while Jacob met a tradesman who made occasional journeys to Canterbury, and during one of these, at Jacob's request, he started many inquiries among the Huguenots. His business as a silk-dealer took him among them. None of them remembered any one by the name of Van Schendel or Raymond. One woman thought there was an orphan girl named Ray-

mond, but she was an adopted daughter of the pastor. All her friends were dead.

It is surprising how rapid will sometimes be the development of a child's intelligence, how suddenly clear becomes the understanding of circumstances, motives, and contingencies. Sophie left Leyden a child only eager to get away from unkindness. She had been in London but a few months, and had overheard several conversations regarding herself, when she began fully to appreciate Jacob's perplexity. She said to him one evening, "If I had stayed in Leyden long enough, Hubert must some time have sent a message or returned. Is it not so?"

"It is truth, Sophie, and I meddled to help and made out to harm thee, I fear; for however master will find us or we him in this great ant-hill, passeth me to tell."

"If it were not for me, Jacob, thou couldst go everywhere searching."

"Stopping in one place may not be the quickest way to find him. If times were not as they are, thou couldst go into a convent and live quietly like a young lady."

"We are not Roman Catholics, are we?" asked Sophie artlessly.

"Here, yes—there, no—if needs be," was a reply all unintelligible to her.

"If there were only some one to take care of thee, never fear but I would track out young master."

"I could stay with Katrina," said Sophie slowly—her present life was endurable—"and wait for thee to go searching."

"I have not money to pay for thy keeping, little one."

Sophie pondered long over his answer.

It was now almost winter, and as the child went about the wet, dismal streets she was often reminded of the days of her poverty and wandering in Antwerp. Not that she was left hungry or homeless now, but she longed for—she scarcely knew what. One afternoon Katrina had to go a long walk, and Sophie went with her. It was early in the afternoon when they started, and the sun beamed softly through a yellow mist. Katrina's errand led her by the abbey, and she yielded to Sophie's entreaties to go in for a look. The child expected to see a church with pictures, shrines, and gorgeous adornments. The vast interior was very strange, and so unlike anything in the Nether-

lands that Sophie was deeply interested. In vain Katrina urged her to hasten; at every step something new or impressive claimed her attention. When at last they came out again from under the great portal, the fog was dense and turning to rain. Katrina was as nearly cross as her stolidity allowed. She warned Sophie to keep hold of her gown or she would be lost in the crowd of people who could scarcely see one another. They turned toward the river, hurrying along, when a great clatter and shouting attracted everybody's attention. There was a party of riders, ladies and gentlemen, no doubt returning from some feast. They were richly attired and accompanied by attendants in livery. Suddenly they halted, the leaders insisting that they had mistaken their way. Sophie, utterly forgetful of Katrina's gown or Katrina's self, pressed forward to see a lady very close to her. She was so richly arrayed that the simple little girl at once assumed that she must be Queen Elizabeth, of whom everybody in England talked. There was a loud and laughing dispute among the cavaliers, then the whole party whirled about with horses rearing and prancing. The hoofs of the lady's horse struck fire out of

the stones. Sophie sprung aside, startling the horse by the motion. There was a wild careering of steeds. Everybody got out of the way—only Sophie. She was rolling under the dancing feet of the lady's horse.

Katrina, too long used to London street scenes to heed the progress of the cavalcade, had gone placidly on. The noise of the horsemen had ceased before she missed Sophie. She spent a good half hour wandering back and forth, audibly scolding the child she had lost; then, fearing night would overtake her, she went home to report Sophie missing. Jacob was much disturbed, but Bette Broeck assured him that Sophie would escape harm. She was so evidently poor that no one would detain her for a reward, and she knew enough English to tell where she belonged. The dwarf had to be content until morning, but when weeks went by and he could find no trace of Sophie, he grieved sincerely, perplexed as he had been by his guardianship of her. Before Christmas, Bette Broeck removed her goods, chattels, and lodgers to a street near London Bridge, and Jacob decided to return to Holland. He often asked himself why he should have found the child

homeless in Antwerp only to take her to London and lose her there. He put up a great many more prayers for her than ever he had for himself.

CHAPTER IX.

ANOTHER HOME.

IT always seemed to Sophie in after years that she had spent a month in dreamland. First came the gay, dancing steeds and gorgeously dressed people, visible for a moment in the London fog. Then a terrible nightmare of pain, of stupor, of being moved, pulled about, hurt by hands that seemed gentle. Strange voices, a new bed, more pain, fever, creatures that surely belonged to wild dreams, for they walked head downward on the ceiling. Finally, things grew clearer, and one day Sophie, opening her blue eyes wide, saw a broad band of sunshine across a big, low room that looked very pleasant. A bright fire snapped in the big fireplace, on each side of which was an oak settle. Another wide oak seat ran along the wall under the long high window with its tiny diamond panes. There were comfortable chairs, many wardrobes and chests, shelves and cupboards filled with household supplies. A woman about

fifty, with sharp eyes, sharp nose, and cheeks like red apples, sat sewing by the fire. She was too well dressed to be a servant, according to Sophie's Dutch notions, but she wore no jewels or lace—only a great bunch of keys hung from a silver chatelaine at her belt.

Sophie herself was lying in a large, wide bed furnished with everything comfortable and sweet with cleanliness. She could see through the window the tops of snow-covered trees, and—where was London, Jacob, Bette Broeck? where was she herself? Her leg was tied up in straw and felt very queer and unwieldy.

In a tremulous voice she asked (in Dutch of course), "Where am I?"

The woman rose, and, coming over and looking very kindly at her, talked for some minutes, Sophie not understanding one word. When the child began in her turn, the woman flung up her hands in despair that changed to amusement. Then she brought from the hob a cup of warm broth that tasted most delicious, tucked the bed-clothes about Sophie, and left her puzzled, but very comfortable. She had not been so well cared for since Vrouw Van Schendel died. After a while the woman came back with

two maids and a man-servant. The maids knew some French, and Sophie had learned a very little of that language from Louis Raymond, but they made nothing out of their attempts to talk. The man tried her with some Spanish phrases he had picked up. He was intelligent enough to know that she said something about Antwerp, and it was decided she must be a Dutch child.

The next day Mistress Jane (for so the maids called the housekeeper) curled Sophie's soft hair in bright ringlets and dressed her in a pretty blue wool gown she had made for her. She propped her up in bed and gave her no end of information and advice, for which Sophie began to love her quite sincerely. Not that she knew one word that was said to her; but she did not need to understand any language to appreciate gentle care-taking, lavender-water on her face, sweet milk, seed cakes, pats on the head, and tickling under her dimpled chin. About noon there was a great chattering outside the door, and in came a red-haired lady, with a great hoop inflating her silk dress and a wide ruff around her neck, but, as she wore no crown, Sophie decided she was not the queen. Two

pretty ladies were with her, and a young man who made more bows and flourishes than Sophie had ever thought one man could accomplish. The lady told him something about the child, and after a little he turned, asking Sophie in Dutch where she came from and who she was.

Jacob had instructed her that in any case where there was reason in telling her past history to begin with the fact that her father was Ludwig Volmar of the once rich and powerful Volmar family, now extinct.

The young man was English, but he had been in the Netherlands, and after hearing Sophie's story in detail he assured the hearers, to whom he interpreted it, that it was quite credible.

"Of a truth the child has the look of one not born in a hovel; blood tells in the hands, though not always in a child's," said the lady, taking one of Sophie's in her own to study it.

"Ay, but she is a beggar now," said the gentleman. "Dead ancestors who meanly carry their estates off with them are of small use now-a-days."

"She is a pretty lass, and I doubt not will one day be a handy maid about the house. Leave

her to me to teach, my lady, and some day she may be fit to dress your hair or care for your laces."

It was the housekeeper who spoke, the warm-hearted old spinster who had cared for Sophie six weeks during a long fever following the broken leg.

"Keep her, keep her, Mistress Jane. 'Tis evident these last friends she tells of care nothing for her, though we will send word to the hunchback she speaks about;" and, with a not unkindly glance at Sophie, the grand lady and her attendants swept away to their grander apartments. Nothing finer wanted Sophie, for now came days of pure delight. Now always warm, always fed with abundance of the nicest food, she had Mistress Jane to teach her English, to fetch her somebody's cast-off playthings, to allow her not one poor starving cat, but three kittens so fat they were cushions. And dogs! Such noble great hounds as Jane let come to visit her! Then just about the time Sophie got on her feet it was Christmas, and an English Christmas was jollity--like nothing she had ever seen. This mansion of Lady Melton's, in whose household Sophie found herself, was just beyond

Chelsea. Lady Melton was a rich and somewhat important personage, often seen at court, and, in spite of folly and affectations most unseemly at her age, she was generous and kind-hearted. Her horse had trampled on Sophie and broken her leg; Sophie must have a share in the Christmas fun. In a great house, where there were more than two-score servants, what difference could one little maid make? So Sophie had again a home. She was not heartless, and she often grieved over Jacob, but when she was told he was not to be found she solaced herself with the reflection that when she was bigger she would find all her friends somewhere out in the world. She learned English readily, for she was always at Mistress Jane's side.

When the summer came it brought no end of delights. Sophie was no longer in a city, but had free range about the grounds that seemed to her like Eden itself. A beautiful lawn in front of the mansion sloped down to the Thames. At one side were terraces of flowers in bewildering variety and profusion; behind was a deer-park, and beyond sweet country lanes and forest. Sophie had duties, but when she remembered Leyden, she laughed at so calling what were

real diversions. She helped Mistress Jane, who was for ever compounding conserves and sweetmeats, gathering herbs, drying rose-leaves, and putting away mysterious mixtures far more potent than any known to leech or surgeon thereabouts—or so said Mistress Jane.

On Sundays they had a long, charming walk between the hedgerows to church in Chelsea. Mistress Jane considered the little ivy-covered edifice a rare building, and pointed out with great pride certain family monuments. Sophie, used to the exquisite churches of the Netherlands, wondered at her taste. Sometimes Mistress Jane took her by boat as far as London Bridge and into the town. That was indeed a holiday! They went to shops most wonderful to Sophie, to see friends who welcomed and feasted Mistress Jane, and when they returned late in the day they more than once fell in with gay water-parties of lords and ladies of the court, and with such splendor as Sophie had never beheld. Lady Melton, when by chance she came on Sophie, spoke kindly to her, and some of the young ladies and gay gentlemen about were inclined to pet her, and, finding she could sing sweetly, they flattered her.

Mistress Jane promptly stopped all this. She was wise in her day and generation: "You will grow up a modest lass and a credit to me, or you will not bide here;" and sound was the teaching she administered. Sophie hardly understood her then, but soon learned to respect her wishes. As the months went past Mistress Jane declared she could see her grow, and truly but for her face Hubert would not have known her. She ran up tall, slender, graceful as a swaying reed. Her fair complexion was more delicately tinted, her face more spiritual, than an English girl's, but her eyes were her greatest beauty—serenely blue as the sky, if she were calm, like stars if she happened to be glad, dark and haunting with a kind of appealing tenderness when she was melancholy.

For two years Sophie found full satisfaction in kittens, dogs, flowers, and birds. She learned to sew better, to understand many housewifely arts. Her education consisted in a store of wise maxims imparted to her by Mistress Jane and in endless stories of events the spinster could remember or legends and traditions of the neighborhood.

But about this time Sophie found a new com-

panion, and one to whose good offices Mistress Jane freely entrusted her. There was a lazy, learned old chaplain attached to the household. He loved nothing better than to discourse of everything in heaven or earth if he could find a listener. About the time that Sophie began to ask questions which Mistress Jane found too hard to answer, the good-natured old chaplain one day surprised Sophie puzzling over one of his books left in a summer-house. He catechized her and found her eager to learn. He was a good man, though indolent and unambitious. He was, moreover, singularly large-minded and sincere in religious matters. He gave Sophie a copy of the Holy Scriptures and bade her study it diligently. Above all he instructed her to read over and over the life and teachings of our Lord. The young girl's questions were original, while her comments interested him so much, that little by little he claimed her as a pupil. He fell into the habit of reading aloud to her from Gower and Chaucer, and then talking over what had been read.

Time ran along, and Sophie was no longer a child, but a sensitive, modest young girl. She was naturally self-contained, and Mistress Jane

had read her many a lecture on the necessity of holding herself aloof from frivolity or flattery. Certain young fops, dangling about the ladies of the mansion, after one or two rebuffs from her declared she was truly Dutch—phlegmatic and slow. The old chaplain knew better than that. A year or more before this their long dialogues had ceased to relate to poetry, and Sophie had begun to ask about the times she lived in. For what were these never-ceasing wars? Who were the Huguenots? Was Henry of Navarre the hero some thought him? If England was Protestant and her religious liberty safe, why was she so slow to help the Netherlands when her help could have meant so much? Who was this black spider of a Philip of Spain, always weaving webs in which to catch his enemies? The chaplain was a man who had little else to do but watch the times, muse on what went on at home and abroad, then from his knowledge of the past speculate over the future. He loved to hear himself talk; accordingly, Sophie in course of months absorbed a large amount of information. The old man would have been surprised at his pupil had she revealed the full extent of

her knowledge of European matters. She asked questions and listened, seldom talking, but as it was he considered her a maiden of great good sense and quick wit. So protected, taught, and cherished, Sophie came to her sixteenth year.

In that year a number of things happened—not very exciting occurrences, yet such as changed somewhat Sophie's life. First, Lady Melton was found to have an incurable heart disease. Her physicians advised her to change her entire mode of living. No more dancing, masquerading, or hunting if she wished to prolong her days. Perhaps her ladyship was not very sorry. Like her queen, she was no longer youthful, and gayety began to pall on her. The young nieces who had filled the old manor-house with frivolous company were married and gone. That too was a relief. In their society Lady Melton had hated to admit that she was growing old. Now she need no longer strive incessantly to disguise her age. Still, she liked bright faces and youth about her, and soon began to make demands on Sophie's time and attention. The maids in the house had never considered Sophie one of their number, and,

finding that she gave herself no airs of authority, they gradually acknowledged her superior refinement. No one cavilled when she became madame's daily companion, sitting with her, singing to her, eating with her. Sophie's connection with the domestics ceased completely after the sudden illness and death of faithful Mistress Jane.

Sophie in her childhood had been a sweet little singer, and even in the troubled days of her Antwerp life Vrouw Van Schendel had been charmed by the music of her voice. Now it was discovered by her ladyship's friends that this voice was truly remarkable, being powerful, sweet, and true, while quite untrained. Lady Melton secured her a teacher, and Sophie was sure of one accomplishment worthy to be mentioned. She possessed another by no means common to all young persons of her day: she could write a good hand, spell tolerably well, and express herself as elegantly as the chaplain himself. He, growing lazier every day, used often to employ Sophie to write letters for him. The exercise pleased her so much that she greatly desired some friend of her own to whom she might send long epistles.

Telling him her desires one day, he advised her to keep a record of common events for the benefit of her children or grandchildren. Thus began Sophie's journal.

CHAPTER X.

SOPHIE'S JOURNAL.

THIS is, it seems to me, the fairest Sunday that ever I knew; yet can I not tell why it seems so. Since Mistress Jane died I have gone to no church. Lady Melton saith it is unbecoming a modest maid to be going about the country lanes alone; so I bide at home. There is little church-going, any way, in these days; none seem to care for it. This morning Lady Melton wished not to arise before mid-day; so I had hours to myself. On Sunday, more than on week-days, I often remember Antwerp. I can almost hear Herr Van Schendel pray. People read prayers here if ever they pray at all. The day being so quiet, I sat me down with the chaplain's Bible and read in the Psalms. How good God has been to me! Of a truth I was never without kind friends, save in Leyden, and even then Jacob did not fail me. No day goes but I pray that again I may see Hubert, Monsieur Raymond, and good Jacob. It is a

great world, but God can send one person to another if it pleaseth him. Lady Melton found me reading, and would know what I could find for me in a book for the clergy. There was much talk, she thought, of people having the right to read the Scriptures, but who really wanted to? Not she.

It seemed to me she knew nothing written there, and so I read her from the Gospels. It surprised her that she understood, and before I ended she had heard three chapters. She talked of it all then, and also asked me much of my past before I came to England. Then she made me sing for her. She was vexed when a servant came saying a gay party from London was even then at the door.

Some among them there were whom I like not at all, and therefore Lady Melton kept me not when I would escape. I ran away to the park, finding it beautiful and still under the oaks. The sun was warm, and many spring flowers are already come. There nobody heard me, so I sang. All the birds sang too, and it seemed as if we *must* sing. Yes, God is so good, and his Son our Saviour is so merciful, how can people help loving him? I think I will read

to Lady Melton every day. Herr Van Schendel was not of the clergy, nor was Louis Raymond. They loved to read the Bible. If it is full of God's words, they must be the best words any one could hear.

I am going to Rochester for a visit. Lady Melton hath a kinswoman there who sendeth for her. We shall stay, I am told, for six weeks or more. This pleaseth me, for her ladyship is grown very kind toward me, almost as if I were of her family. She hath given me a fine blue gown, a cap lined and edged with velvet, and a beautiful silk kerchief.

We started early this morning with several men and maids. The day was fine, and we rode slowly, as Lady Melton wished not to get over-weary. Having stopped for long rest and eating, we came about sunset of the second day where we could see the great walls of the castle, built more than four hundred years ago, and, close by, the cathedral. There was a beautiful light on the river Medway, and, though I was more tired with the great journey than ever I was in my life before, I was almost sorry the day was gone. Her ladyship's kinsfolks live on High Street, not far from the charity house lately built

for "six poor travelers not being rogues or proc-tors." We had some sport and jests about stop-ping there, but did agree that Richard Watts had not us in mind when building. His own house is not far away, and there has he once had Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth for his guest.

We are come to a most quiet, old-fashioned household, ruled by a very old master and mistress. There is much comfort, if not the daintinesses her ladyship is used to have.

The weather is getting more beautiful each day. 'Tis now almost May, and the country is a delight. One of the servants who came with us here is called "Old Giles," and her ladyship has made him my special attendant. He entered her service when a lad, and now he is more than sixty years old, very stout, very faithful, and withal a man of great shrewdness. Yesterday, as we were riding outside the town, he talked of the troublous times in England that he so well remembers.

I have a pretty little jennet, and Giles a stout old cob, and together we are exploring the country. No Netherlander ever hated the Spaniards more than Giles hates them. He told me of seeing many of them in London

about the time Queen Mary married the Spaniard—dark, cruel-faced men with cloaks over one shoulder and hand always ready with a sword. He hath seen several horrible martyrdoms in Smithfield, when men, women, and young girls have been burned. Almost under the spires of old St. Batholomew he saw three priests tortured and burned for reading the Gospel and allowing it to be read to their people. Yes, and he hath actually been near enough to Lady Jane Grey to hear some of her words that dreadful day when she was beheaded on Tower Hill. He had been sent to the house of one of the officers with hampers of wine, and, finding something unusual was under way, he managed to linger. Oh, it was pitiful to hear him tell of her sweet face and her gentleness—her words, “I pray you all, good Christian people, to bear me witness that I die a true Christian woman, and that I look to be saved by none other means, but only by the mercy of God in the merits of his only Son Jesus Christ.” Her maids wept bitterly, and the hangman kneeled at her feet and begged her forgiveness for what he must do. She forgave him most sincerely, only saying, “I pray you despatch me quickly.”

"It was bad luck to be too good, too rich, or of much account in those days, Mistress Sophie. Many a time I blessed my stars that I was a poor and stupid errand-boy, and that if I had any religion it was not enough to speak of."

"What a rejoicing there must have been, Giles, when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth came to the throne!"

"Well, there was less roasting of human creatures," bluntly assented Giles, adding, grimly, "It is well, though, for them as agrees with her. She is not for making very happy any who differ much."

"Oh, I do not know about that. She shelters the Lutherans and the Huguenots, and she is not one of them."

"Yes, but she wants not to quarrel with the Netherlands; and as for the Huguenots, I was once told there was talk of her marrying this Henry of Navarre, who has just won lately a big battle."

"Has he? and is he king?" I asked, for I had not had a conversation on public matters with the chaplain for some months.

"That I don't just know," said Giles. "I heard that there was great rejoicing among the

Huguenots in Canterbury over this battle of Ivry, as they call it."

"Oh, Giles! Canterbury is *near* here, is it not?"

"No great way off, my lady."

"Then we could go there, could we not? have always heard of Canterbury."

"Naught hinders you if distance be all that lies in the way. 'Tis a grand city, to my thinking. The cathedral is far finer than this one here. Still, Canterbury is a dull place now to what I remember it as a child. I was born there in Mercury lane, and was a boy in the days when pilgrims came to à Becket's shrine. Such riches as that shrine held! Nobody ever saw their like in England, or ever will again, I am told. I was a big lad when our queen's father, King Henry, spoiled that. Rough work he made with shrines, convents, and churches."

I did not, after that, heed the old man's talk, although I let him go on at length about the olden days in Canterbury. I finally interrupted him to say, "If Lady Melton allows me, let us go over to Canterbury very early to-morrow, should the day be fair. I would fain see the old city and have time to go all about it."

"You will be well pleased, Mistress Sophie, and I doubt not of her ladyship's permission. If you like, tell her Marjory Nelson, my sister and once her serving-woman, keepeth an orderly, well-furnished house there, where I can see you cared for when hungry or tired."

"Thanks, good Giles; her ladyship will then trust me, I am sure, or trust you, rather, for she knows you can take care of me."

"There is not much danger of highwaymen. 'Tis a good old road, made a thousand years ago, men say. How they know I cannot tell."

"The chaplain says the Romans built it. They came here from Rome."

"Hear to that now! Well, 'tis the best thing I ever knew of them Roman folk, or their pope either."

I am writing this in old Canterbury, of which I have heard so much. I came yesterday with Giles, thinking to return by night. We came to his sister's house, and Marjory Nelson made us welcome most heartily. She liveth in a queer little place, all up stairs and down, full of funny nooks and quaint corners. Some little windows show only chimney-pots, some frame beautiful pictures, and on every

window-ledge she hath blooming flowers. I had seen only enough of Canterbury to fill me with desire for more, when Giles said we must mount again. So grieved was I that Mistress Marjory bethought herself of a fine plan. She sent Giles back begging Lady Melton (who knoweth her well and trusteth her fully) to leave me with her as a lodger until such time as Giles cometh back for me. Marjory hath a comely, well-grown daughter who can guide me about the place, and a big bashful son who could be my knight in any perilous adventure. He burneth red if I but look at him, yet his arm is a thing of sinew and muscle. So Giles went away, leaving me happy. I have a little bedroom in a sort of tower, and a sitting-room built out over the path below. I can sit there like a bird hid in a nest, and see the street-scenes. Roses are budding on the vines that creep all over my windows. I have just eaten such a nice little supper sent me here, for I care not to eat with strangers below. I am very tired, for Giles took me to see many sights, and 'tis no small thing to stroll all about the cathedral, within and without. Oh, that wonderful, that beautiful place! They tell me 'tis not half so

fine as when the Roman Catholics had their gorgeous shrines, statues, and altars there. This I cannot believe. The vast white halls and most wondrous arches need no frippery of velvet, gold, and tinsel. I thought there were no churches in England equal to my old beloved cathedral in Antwerp; but this— Oh, the white silent beauty of it within and the magnificent, great mass of it without!—its towers against the soft blue sky; the little birds flitting in and out its carved stonework! I think Canterbury is the sweetest, most heaven-like place for a home I was ever in. I so said to Mistress Marjory, but she hath laughed at me, saying I should see the broken heads here after a brawl.

To-day is Sunday, and I have had a foolish exercise of mind that hath amounted to naught. I can never forget that Jacob agreed with me long ago that Monsieur Raymond and Hubert talked once together of Canterbury. I planned yesterday to go to the Huguenot services to-day in the crypt of the cathedral—why I cannot tell, since Louis Raymond is the only Huguenot that ever I have known. Catherine Nelson liketh nothing better than to show me new

things, and so we started betimes down Mercury lane, through Christchurch gate, into the cathedral precincts. We easily found the crypt, but it was not anywhere near the hour of service, or so said an old man loitering there. I was surprised to see here all sorts of things used by the Flemish in making silk. The old man said the French and Flemish manufactories had been carried on here for thirty years by sanction of the queen. I wandered about the cloisters a while after that, until we heard music in the choir, and so went up to listen to the English service. There were a goodly number of people in their seats, and one told me the singing was to be something more than ordinary. Lo, indeed, it was, but all church music is to me uncommon. I begin to wonder what it is that is trying to sing itself out from the inside of my own heart. I always forget I am not alone if once the organ sounds. This morning I was thinking of so many things when they sang a song of thanksgiving. I was thankful, remembering how I had been cared for by God when there was no mother, no father, left on earth. I sang as if I alone had all the praise to utter for every soul there. It seemed as if no one else

had so much to love God for. I fear much now that my voice was clearer than all the rest, and I made myself remarked. But when the reading began I was aware of a man sitting not far away who looked so much like Louis Raymond that my heart gave a great leap. At first I was sure it must be my old friend; then I saw this man not only seemed older and more stout, but different from Monsieur Raymond after all. He was graver, had thinner hair, and a heavier mustache. One arm was in a sling. Still, I was so startled by the resemblance that I scarcely breathed until he turned toward me, and we looked straight into one another's eyes for a second. I saw then that not the faintest recognition was in his own. I might have been anybody rather than little Sophie, his "*petite cousine*"—I mean Louis Raymond's cousin, for so he used to call me. But after this man turned away his indifferent glance I felt the tears filling my eyes. Oh, those dear old times! I was little then, and people could pet me, and I could tell them how I loved them. I belong to no one now. Lady Melton is kind, and even affectionate, but she was never like Vrouw Van Schendel. Even as it is, I fear to show much

affection for her ladyship, lest it be said I do it for gain. I overheard but last week a maid say that Miss Sophie was a silly creature if she did not make the most of her ladyship's favor while it lasted. I am lonely, and dear Vrouw Van Schendel died thinking Hubert was to be my brother.

When service ended I went down the long nave behind this man, but it was not Raymond, for he walked as if a little lame. This disappointment was so brief that I wonder much it hath made me so cast down. Mistress Marjory hath taken me for a long walk before sunset, even to Harbledown, and shewed me from afar the hospital for lepers. I tried to get back my cheerful heart of the morning by thinking how dreadful to be one of those wretched lepers.

Mistress Nelson would know at last if I were ill or over-tired, so I told her something of the matter. She said there is a Huguenot pastor here whom all love for his goodness. He liveth in a house which she, even as we walked, pointed out. She adviseth me to seek him out and ask if any persons by the names that I have remembered are known to him. She says many Huguenots come and go, and he knows of all.

Monday Evening.—Never have I had such glad, such good news to write down since I began this record. Yesterday I resolved to find this Pastor Bercier, and was told that he is almost every noon at the cathedral. It was a day in which both Marjory and Catherine have duties many and wearisome, so I thought it no harm to go alone to seek the old pastor. He had not been to the meeting-place of his people, but he was expected there in a half hour; so told me an old weaver. Therefore I went again to the choir, and wandered about looking at the monuments. A man came from the crypt behind me, and as I was by myself looking at the wondrous gilded and colored tomb of Archbishop Chichele, who, I am told, founded one of the great colleges—All Souls' in Oxford—some one spoke to me, saying, "I am waiting here for my friend Pastor Bercier. Can I save you delay by giving him any message for you, madame?"

I turned me quickly. It was the man who resembled Louis Raymond. He had the voice of Raymond. I could not speak for an instant, then I replied, "I come to ask if he knows of Huguenots by name *Raymond*."

He started at the words, and gazed astonished straight into my face, saying, "My name is Raymond!"

"Oh, *mon ami*!" I cried. "Oh, Monsieur Raymond!"

He stammered, "You are *not* little Sophie? You are—"

"Little Sophie grown to big Sophie," I said, half laughing and with my eyes filling with tears. I knew his voice this time for certain. He caught both my hands and looked wonderfully glad and kind, studying my face as if it were a map of the places I had seen since we parted in Antwerp.

"My dear cousin (you once let me call you so), now I know why I gazed at you so yesternorn at service. I never fancied my pale little friend grown tall and rosy and—wholly different. Still, your face was like something one tries to recall—whether out of a dream or a face seen somewhere in the past, and forgotten, one cannot tell. Your voice too—little Sophie never sang very remarkably, but you made most wondrous music. And to find you in Canterbury! How will Hubert"—

"Oh, tell me of Hubert! I feared I never

should find him on earth. Is he well? hath he forgotten his little adopted sister?"

"Never has he forgotten her. Come, Sophie, let us come out into the sunshine. There is a bench in the grounds near the cloisters where we can sit us down and find out one another's past."

We went down and out into the warm sunlight while Raymond was saying, "Hubert went back to Leyden when he heard of his kinswoman's death, but he found strangers in the house. They professed to know nothing of thee, but a servant said thou wert very unhappy while in the house, and that at last thou hadst run away, never more returning."

"Indeed, I was most miserable there," I said; and, even though speaking of misery, I was happy to hear Monsieur Raymond say once more "Thee" and "Thou." He looked half startled too when he had thus spoken, for I think he found me so much more changed than I found him. We reached a bench where we could sit to talk, and he was always studying my face as I told him all that had happened since I met Jacob in the market-place. I even think (though I would not cherish vanity) that he found me more pleasant to look on than

when I was a lean and hungry little one. He had no foolish way of flattery, as the young fops have who sometimes visit her ladyship. But he said whereas once I was hollow-cheeked and white, now my color was as the almond-blossoms of France, and my eyes— But I was foolish. He said when Hubert could not find me (and he searched diligently), he came with him (Louis) to England, having money affairs he must look after in London. Then he went back, and only gave me up after a year of useless searching. Hubert then joined Raymond in fighting for the Protestant faith under Henry of Navarre.

I never saw my friend so excited as when yesterday he talked of his hero and this glorious battle of Ivry that has lately taken place. It seems the battlefield was not far from Raymond's former home. He described to me the hours before the battle when both armies—the League or Roman Catholic forces and that of Henry IV.—gave themselves to prayer. Then came a fearful thunder-storm, and after it a most terrible sight in the heavens: two armies in the clouds seemed to be having a furious fight, and the waving of their blood-red banners

was solemn and mysterious. The Huguenot king had only eight thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry. The League had twelve thousand men-at-arms and four thousand horsemen. He says it was a glorious sight when Henry of Navarre rode out bare-headed before his army and prayed aloud to God for help. He pledged himself to die or to conquer with them ; then, putting on his helmet with three white plumes, he bade them look to those if the standard failed them, for they would lead in the path of duty and honor. Raymond says it was a long, fierce fight,—that there was a time of dreadful suspense when the soldiers could not see their leader in the awful smoke from cannon and musketry. Louis was wounded in his leg and arm, but managed to keep on his horse, sometimes so faint he was only dimly conscious of the clang of sabres, the shouts of the soldiers, and the wails of the wounded. He was almost ready to fall and die when the shout went up from the Huguenots, "Victory! victory!" and men saw the three white plumes of their hero.

Raymond had many old friends in the little village of Norman Court near by, and after the battle he was tenderly cared for. All this

happened in March, not quite three months ago. He recovered, but will never be able to fight again on account of the injury to his leg; he will always be a little lame. One scarcely notices it, however. His arm is really well, so he does not mourn, for he thinks the cause of liberty is secure. Henry of Navarre is a Huguenot, and Henry will rule France.

Then another thing pleases Louis. It seems about the time that he was in Antwerp his ancestral estates were unjustly claimed by some count high in favor at court. Lately the count has died, and by a series of changes I do not remember the title to the old chateau is once more Louis Raymond's.

Before hearing all about the battle I made sure that Hubert was well. He is now in London, and I can soon see him; he too is to be no longer a soldier, but will soon go to Leyden. There, in a city rejoicing in religious liberty, Hubert is to be a citizen. His father had a friend there, a banker, and Hubert is to be in business under him.

All this we talked of, and much more. Louis used to tell me of a dear sister and a little cousin—Jeanne and Marie. All this time they

have been living in Canterbury with their former pastor, who brought them over from France. Hubert has been here often to visit them, and is coming very soon again. Raymond will bring them to see me to-morrow. Oh, to think of it all! While we sat there Pastor Bercier came. He looked like a good old gray-headed angel, if there could be one. His eyes are blue, and he laid his hand on my head as no one ever has since the burgher Van Schendel died. I do not know how long we would have stayed there had the pastor not walked home with me. Mistress Marjory was astonished before she learned all I had to tell her. I was glad when she opened the door that the old pastor was there, for her first expression on beholding Monsieur Raymond at my side was peculiar. She told me later she thought him some gallant who had followed me home, and was wroth that I had not dismissed him. She called him by so many fine names that I think he must seem of better breeding than the men one sees commonly. He maketh them appear somewhat clownish, I do perceive.

To-day I stayed within doors, and made pretty the room with all the flowers I could

pluck in Marjory's garden. I am well pleased that I have brought with me my new grey paduasoy gown with the lace frill. Marjory said it became me wondrously, and Catherine would have it that I put a pink posy in my girdle. I watched for my new friends with overmuch impatience, greatly desiring to see them, but, of a sudden hearing their voices at the door and their step on the stairs, I was of a tremble. I had never yet a young maiden for an acquaintance. It may happen that they find me strange-mannered.

They came in together, and Monsieur Raymond's beautiful sister took both my hands and kissed me. Never have I seen such beauty—no, not in London, where I have seen by chance even the great court beauties. She—this Jeanne—is darker even than Raymond (but it is meet I call him henceforth Monsieur); her cheeks are like deep-red roses, and her eyes so large, so black, and so soft, with lashes like silk. I loved this beautiful Jeanne the moment I felt her hand clasp mine. Then the "*petite Marie*," of whom I have been told oftentimes in Antwerp—she greeted me. I used to be naughtily jealous of her then, for monsieur praised her as being

better-behaved than I. Now I feared her just a little. She is plump and rosy like the English, but her blue eyes are mocking. They dance, and funny thoughts seem ever to make them flash. One thinks the humorous flashes may be for something about one's self, and is ill at ease. They were all kind, talking as if really I were a relation, and when I asked about Hubert, Marie told me all I could wish to know. Jeanne did not speak half as much of him, but she very lovingly gave me to understand that he grieved for me. She said he had told her that I had come to him in the place of his own dear sister Elizabeth, and then his mother gave me over again to him. Jeanne has a tenderer voice than has Marie. They came early in the afternoon, and naught would do but that I return with them for a visit. I was nothing loth, so, after talking with Mistress Marjory of it, I made sure her ladyship could see nothing amiss in my going. We had a charming walk, coming very soon, as it seemed, to the Bercier home. I have in all my life seen nothing so cosy and pleasant. 'Tis not at all grand, but more simple than any save the servants' rooms in Lady Melton's manor-house; but 'tis dainty.

I have heard that French folks make plain things pleasing where the Dutch and English make them only useful and ugly. I see 'tis a truth. There are nice hangings of tapestry and cushions where we have hard oak boards. The dishes we only eat from and put out of sight are here of finer shapes and set out on shelves for ornaments. But it was not the jugs nor the bright kettles nor the flowers in the windows that first I heeded. Madame Bercier is to me a new sort of woman, so *petite*, so motherly, so like— Well, not like Vrouw Van Schendel, who, while gentle, was ever statelier than Lady Melton even; not like her ladyship, who, if kind, is sometimes not quite natural with her airs and graces. Really, Madame Bercier is most like brisk, busy, good Mistress Jane with her keys and her conserves. Madame is more polished, but she fussed over me just as Mistress Jane fussed over a guest whom she would make happy and comfortable.

We talked all the long afternoon. Sometimes monsieur told of affairs in France; sometimes the girls asked me about my life. I tried very hard to let them see that I was a nobody, a dependant on Lady Melton's kindness. At least,

if I am not an object of her charity (and I know I now return her services of affection for her kindness), I am by no means a young lady of social position. I could not seem, however, to make them know of how little importance in the world I am. I will wear my plainest gowns hereafter, and not speak of things to which Lady Melton has so accustomed me that I mention them, forgetting they are peculiar to the rich.

Later in the day Bertrand Bercier, the pastor's son, came. I like him very much. He hath the finest face that one can think of a man possessing, yet a face without weakness. He is to be a pastor like his father, but Raymond tells me he will be far more learned. He studies in a school here close by the cathedral. He has gone into the English Church, and certain scholars are greatly interested in him, saying he hath in him fine material for a clergyman. His father is most fond and proud of him. All treat him almost with reverence, young as he is—all save Marie. I could fill long pages of my journal with Monsieur Bertrand. We cannot talk long enough together. He is sympathetic, and like one who ever understands what one but thinks to utter ere it gets into words. For

the first time since I was a child I am with people who think and speak what is right and true, with no fear or care about seeming. Fashion and all those things that Lady Melton most admires are as far away as London itself. Religion even is not as with my good old chaplain. It means more here. At the same time, I feel as if with happy young folks who are good and in whose sport there is no malice and no coarseness. The young people I have seen at Lady Melton's are old in worldliness. The young girls say things I blush to listen to, and then flutter and giggle at double-meaning jests the gentlemen make before them.

Madame Bercier had a feast for me, and we ate it under a great tree in her garden. She has flowers and plants all arranged as in France, so they told me.

Afterward Monsieur Bertrand told me all the long story of this great cathedral. We sat in the garden until the moon came up. The pastor and Monsieur Louis had most earnest argument about Henry IV. of France. Raymond idolizes him. He thinks him the noblest hero, the kingliest king, who ever led an army of brave men to liberty and seated himself on a

throne. Pastor Bercier, being old, is not so enthusiastic. He likes not some things in King Henry's life, and he fears that he will under pressure become a Catholic rather than endanger his crown.

The girls had a few duties with Madame Bercier, but Bertrand entertained me well. I forgot he was not as old as my good chaplain, and talked to him quite as if he were. Jeanne laughed at him when she came back to us. She said he had never time from his studies to waste with Marie and herself. He told them, teasingly, that they were old stories, but I was a new book.

That night I slept in the little upper room with Marie, and asked her of Monsieur Bertrand's studies and what he would be. Men's life is so different from ours. Monsieur Raymond's seems full of adventure and change. Ours goes happening along, with no purpose in it. I talked about this to Marie, and said Monsieur Bertrand interested me because he loved the cathedral and was eager about his studies. He seemed to me very noble and like the Reformers I had read of, and his face had the look I remembered in a picture of St. John

the Beloved I saw once in a church-window. I was so happy with all that had come to me, I fear I talked too much. Marie grew quieter and quieter, and once she said English girls were not so shy as French. I had not thought she was shy, and I am not really English, but I felt rebuked. I said when I trusted any one I almost thought out loud sometimes. She said she was more "shut up fast" with people she loved than with strangers. I was saying then something suggested by her "cousin Bertrand," when she exclaimed quite shortly, 'He is not my cousin!' I knew then she must be sleepy or tired of my talk. I said my prayers and fell asleep.

The next day Giles came for me, and it is more than a week since I have taken time to write of what has occurred since then. I began this record when I had little to put down, but now more of interest has come to me. Giles brought kind messages to me from Lady Melton. She did not know, of course, that I had found any old or new friends, and she did not say I must return. When, however, I had talked with Giles, it seemed to me I ought to go back, for he told me that her ladyship had

been very ill. The more I questioned him the more he reported from the maids—how she was now in bed all day, and had sent to London for her own doctor. The Rochester doctor had also been called to see her.

It was still early, Giles having started at sunrise, which at this season cometh, it seemeth to me, soon after midnight. All were as kind to me as if they had known me a long time, and they urged me to come again for another visit should Lady Melton recover.

Monsieur Raymond was the quietest of all until I was about to depart; then he said that as his horse had need of exercise, he would accompany me some way on my journey. Giles had brought my pony, thinking I might want to use it, so we were speedily mounted. It was a warm day, and all the wayside and hedges were abloom with wild flowers. I heard the song of a lark for the first time. Giles scowled fiercely at Monsieur Raymond during a half hour, but monsieur talked only to him for a while. His face cleared little by little, until he grew very civil and told monsieur all about hop-raising, for which Kent begins to be quite famous. Then Louis (I may call him so in my

journal sometimes) rode slowly by my side, asking me many questions. We had talked before of France, of wars, public events, of Hubert, and of Raymond's family; it embarrassed me a little to have him now keep ever the talk on me. He would know of my daily life, my pleasures, duties, what I had learned. He even wished me to sing to him as we rode along the quiet highway. I urged it was a shame to do that of a morning, when the larks were singing, but he said what tis silly to write. He hath a musical voice, and the eyes like Jeanne's, soft and dark. He, being much older and acquainted with the world, has—is— Well, no doubt he would know if Hubert will find in me a sister whom he can care about or only an ignorant, neglected girl. He hath no reason to be interested in my manner of life for other cause. I sang for him, and told him all he would know. He turned not about until we saw the huge walls of Rochester Castle; then he bade me adieu, and by some other road sought an inn for rest and refreshment before going back. For what I should of a sudden grow so melancholic is what puzzleth me. I suppose I reflected that I might never more see this friend of my childhood.

Lady Melton saith we have a peculiar affection for those whom we knew when young.

I found her ladyship very weak and much whiter. Her own doctor, Fawkes from London, hath been here to-day. Poor Lady Melton! It appeareth to me they are not half so anxious (this medical man of Rochester and this famous Doctor Fawkes) to find out how to cure the poor woman as how to combat one another. When either is alone with us he talketh in words we understand. When the two meet 'tis marvelous how learned is each. Her ladyship is now dropsical, and her feet do swell. This Doctor Humphreys of Rochester caused us to boil four live toads in two pounds of oil of olives for the space of an hour or till they burst, and with this oil we are plentifully to anoint her ladyship.* Doctor Fawkes of London thought better of a different remedy. He hath much to say of cardialgia, whatever that may be, and he discoursed for a half hour this noon of a certain cephalico-cardiac medicine that Queen Elizabeth recommended to Rudolphus II. It was "composed of amber, musk, and civet dissolved in spirit of roses." Doctor Humphreys kept

* Remedy for dropsy in time of Elizabeth.

interrupting him with talk of "tumults in the ventricles of the heart, the veins, and the imaginary rhomboidal receptacles in the muscles," and quoting Tackbenius and Sylvius, Celsus and Hippocrates. Then they disagreed about "mechanic ratiocination." Alas! I fear all their learning will do her small good. Both doctors use short words when speaking with me, and both tell me there is little hope she can live. She hath a long time had trouble with her heart, but has danced and ridden fast after hounds, which was bad for her.

Last Tuesday, as I sat at my embroidery-frame with Lady Melton, she being for the first time in many days wholly dressed, a visitor was announced. We fancied him of little account, the maid not remembering his name. Behold, it was my adopted brother Hubert Van Schendel! No sooner did he learn from the Berciers of my being here than he came post-haste. I would never have failed to know him. To be sure, he hath a beard and is a man, but 'tis the same merry, kind Hubert who will be somewhat of a boy if he liveth a century. Lady Melton knew all—I had been wont to tell her of my old home; therefore she was in no wise

shocked when he kissed me right cordially on either cheek. She liked him greatly, and so pressed him that he stayed the next day and night with us. We talked of all he had lived through, and of what had happened to me; then of the family in Canterbury. I was greatly surprised to have him praise Bertrand's wisdom, the pastor's goodness, madame's hospitality, and Marie's fun-loving, but have never a word to say about Jeanne's rare beauty and sweet ways—so winning, so *débonnaire*. I even spoke out my surprise to Lady Melton, to whom I had sung Jeanne's praises. She called me an innocent. She said, "Of a truth he talketh little of her, but let you only speak Jeanne's name, and he blusheth like a maiden, his eye lighteth, and he hears little of what you say next. He loveth this Jeanne; 'tis plainer than plain to me."

Lady Melton and he had a long talk on the second day. He began it by saying I was to him a sacred charge from his dead mother. Lady Melton returned that I was to her like an adopted daughter. Then she made as if she would send me from the room, but at last detained me to hear what followed. She said to

Hubert that her death might occur at any time—that she wished to leave me a legacy sufficient to provide for me for life. She said she had amply portioned all who had any claim on her, and now her only care was to make sure my future. What troubled her was where I would go after her death, for a nephew would take possession of the Chelsea manor-house and he was a bachelor. Hubert then confessed that his errand now to Canterbury was to gain the Berriers' consent to his marriage with Jeanne. If he won her (and he had much reason to believe he might), they would live in Leyden. He was good enough to say that I should be taken into their home as a well-beloved sister. That pleased her ladyship much, and thereupon she sent for a barrister or two. They made out papers for her relating to this legacy that she would give me, and appointing Hubert my guardian. I have seldom seen her more pleased with a stranger than she was with Hubert. When he must go back to Canterbury she sent urgent invitations to all or any of the new friends there to come to Rochester for a visit of days.

Hubert had been gone for a week, and I had

begun to feel somewhat grieved that no message came by post for me from the new friends, when my heart was smitten with a more real sorrow. Lady Melton telleth me that it is borne in upon her that her days on earth will now be few. She is gentle, and clingeth to me like one younger than I. To-day it is most pitiful to think of what she telleth me. She is afraid to die. She said to me of a sudden, as I was smoothing her hair, "Tell me, I pray thee, Sophie, if one told *thee* thou must die to-morrow, how would it be with thee?"

When I had thought I told her: "It seemeth to me I would at first be sorry to leave some people and things—to go away from earth. I would wish I had been better and done more for others; then I would end all work I had to finish, ask our blessed Saviour to forgive all my sins, and die to awake in heaven."

"Thou art young, and cannot have much on thy conscience. The chaplain says thou art very innocent. I have lived a long life full of folly and only seeking my pleasure. Now all my follies look to me like sins, and they weigh me down. I never pray. I have no right to the saints' heaven, Sophie."

“The chaplain does not know my sins, dear Lady Melton. God knows I do wrong things and think wrong thoughts. Nobody has a right to heaven. Our Lord says, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.’”

“Go, Sophie, and fetch the Bible. I see thou dost often read with the chaplain,” said her ladyship; “then read me about the forgiveness of sin. I must not die before I know that mine are not laid up against me.”

I got the Bible, and we read about sins like scarlet being white as snow. They seemed true words and most comforting to me, but she looked sad and more troubled than ever. She talketh often now to me, and begs me pray for her, which I would surely do even had she not besought me.

For a week now Lady Melton hath been so well I marvel that we thought her nigh to her death. It was Tuesday that she told me with all her own sprightliness to make myself fine for company, because guests would arrive at noon. Since her ladyship’s illness she has taken half this house for the summer, and hath sent for her Chelsea maids and men, so we are

really a separate household, and make no trouble for our former entertainers.

When I asked for whom I must make ready, she told me she had sent invitations to each and all of our Canterbury friends to spend several days with us. How happy their coming hath made me! At first, when I saw the pious old pastor and simple Madame Bercier sitting down with Lady Melton, I wondered much of what their discourse could be. She talketh of routs, plays, cards, hunts, and masquerades with her London gentry, or did when well. To my relief (for I feared that she would shock them or else weary herself), Lady Melton told them, as honestly as she had told me, that she was soon to die and that she feared death. Shall I ever forget the way the old Huguenot and his wife comforted her? They agreed that she was a poor creature with an empty, wasted life behind her, but they let her know the holiest saint does not earn a right to heaven. And how they spoke of heaven! Why, it never can again seem far off to me. While they talked I actually thought those to be envied who were soonest to go. These Huguenots are a very hopeful people, brave for all they have to

endure of persecutions, and serene in thinking of the future. Some way, after that Lady Melton was as natural and easy with them as she could have been with her father or mother. They told her long stories of France that amused her. They have a bright way—a French way—of saying funny things, especially madame, and I hear them laughing together. Her ladyship saith they are better for her than ten doctors and all the priests or chaplains together that ever she knew.

Jeanne and Marie came first with the father and mother Bercier. The second day came the three others, Monsieur Raymond, Hubert, and young Bercier. Jeanne and Hubert are betrothed, and they are so happy they seem different from the rest of us who have no wonderful thing in our lives, like this love they have. I never saw such a look in any one's eyes as comes into Hubert's when he sees Jeanne unexpectedly. The sun appears to shine in his face, it lights up so quickly. Jeanne does not talk much, but she is quite ready to go to Leyden. Raymond tells her she never will learn to talk Dutch well. She says Hubert has never talked French well, but they have understood

one another. How fond Herr and Vrouw Van Schendel would have been of this beautiful daughter-in-law!

Bertrand is interested in Rochester, so we have walked together visiting such parts of the old castle as we might see. Yesternight, it being moonlight, we strolled around the cathedral. I suppose monsieur, now having told me of his past since we were in Antwerp, hath not any more of interest to ask or to tell. He falleth behind with Marie, while Bertrand hath not time enough wherein to talk to me of things all interesting and instructive. That soundeth as if he were like a pedagogue, ever teaching. Far from it! I find that with his angelic face and his learning withal he hath young blood and spirit. He is far more spiritually-minded than monsieur, yet, queer is it, I am silent with Raymond while giddy moods come to me and I jest with this Bertrand. Jeanne looketh surprised at our much fun and laughter. She saith I have changed natures with Marie. We think Marie grieveth to know Jeanne will so soon go away from her. She hath a sorry look in her eyes at times, and I can scarce see how she hath ever been the sport-maker they say

she is. Bertrand is teaching me about the Norman way of building. He draws pictures for me which I copy. Hubert tells me to-day that he will soon return to Leyden, to get all in readiness for his life there. At Christmas-tide he will come again for his marriage. He thinks that Lady Melton will die ere that time. If so be she does, he has planned all for me. I am to be received by the Berciers, and stay with them until the wedding. Then I go away to Leyden to be one of the new household there. Hubert is kind and I am fond of Jeanne, but—Something oppresses me. Will I not be an outsider, after all? Their happiness cannot be mine. I really am *no* sister of theirs. I could almost wish I might stay in England with these old people in whose house we now are. To-day Bertrand spoke of the possibility of my coming to their home. He seemed glad. He loveth to hear singing. Marie singeth sweetly, if her voice is not strong. I cannot persuade her to sing with me. She likes me, if I mistake not, else why is she so thoughtful to do kind things for me? I find her looking at me wistfully at times. I know not if she pitieth me that I have no relatives. Bertrand and Hubert

talked long together to-day, and Hubert later had a mind to tell me, he said, of their conversation. He did not, but it could have concerned me in no way. They talked it (whatever it was) over again with monsieur, and all day, I fancy, he wore a gloomy air. Perhaps he too laments over Jeanne's going so far away, yet he liveth not in Canterbury.

Lady Melton asked me this day if Huguenots ever married their cousins. She thinks Monsieur Raymond might in that case marry his cousin Marie, to whom he is very dear, no doubt.

If so, perhaps they would go away to that sunny old chateau that he used to tell me about, and I never would see them any more. Alas! marriages, like deaths, break up families and make sadness for friends left alone. In those Antwerp times I liked to asked questions about Raymond's old home and his people, but I was ever jealous of this unknown Marie, for he said she had a better temper than I.

CHAPTER XI.

SOPHIE'S JOURNAL (*Continued*).

MONSIEUR Raymond goeth away to France, summoned there by affairs of his estate. I had gone to the garden to pick a posey for her ladyship when he came, and, standing under the big linden tree, said he must needs say adieu. The tears came into my eyes. He stood silent, yet as if thinking of somewhat he would say. He kissed my hand, telling me that perhaps when we met again it would be in Leyden. He should some day visit his sister. I could not talk.

“Or,” saith he, looking me quickly in the eyes, “little Sophie may find a home in England.”

“Have I not one now?”

“I mean not this” he said, “but my friend may marry to stay here.”

He, Raymond, the friend who had, I thought, forgotten I was no longer a child,—he to speak to me of my marrying! I felt the hot waves of

red color roll over my face. I was almost angry at him, but angrier still at myself. It made him stiff. He added then a speech that came not easy—how he hoped, wherever I might be, only happiness would come to me, and after that he went away. I should think Jeanne would miss her brother more than appeareth, but then she hath Hubert.

Lady Melton is weaker to-day. A sadness has settled down on me. I reproach myself that I am not more sorry our friends must return to-morrow. My life has been so quiet that seeing so many people all at the same time begins to confuse me. I shall not be sorry to be alone for a while with Lady Melton. I will read her all the comforting Psalms and Gospel words Father Bercier has marked for her. Again, I have writ "*Father Bercier.*" It seemeth easy, because I have called the chaplain in Chelsea so, and this good pastor has grown very tender of me.

All are gone again, and now the last few weeks are as a dream. I begin to love Lady Melton more and more. I am ever with her. She recalleth her early years, and giveth me excellent precepts and advice about my conduct when she is gone. Her mind is at peace. She

believeth God hath for Jesus' sake forgiven her sins. All fear of death hath left her. Now she is cheerful, and sometimes most entertaining. Yesterday she told me of a great banquet she once attended in the Guildhall in London, when the lord mayor's fool jumped into a big bowl of custard, and she telleth no end of tales about the court. She danced once with Lord Leicester, a man I little admire.

To-day young Bercier came with messages kindly, but of no great import. I wonder at his riding so far to tell us that Hubert went to Ipswich, and thence to a port in Flanders, instead of returning some other way home: that seemed all he had of news. I was pleased to see the young man himself, with news or without. Had I an own brother, I could wish him like Bertrand. He has been to London since he was here, and told us of his doings there. He is very wroth that the queen allows the great cathedral of St. Paul to be so desecrated as it is. 'Tis no proper sanctuary, but a mall for the lowest, coarsest business, a lounging-place for knaves, thieves, and ruffians. Lady Melton told him that her father was in St. Paul's that time, about fifty years ago, when great piles of New

Testaments were burned, and cardinals, bishops, and abbots rejoiced to see heresy blotted out by fire. That very time the Protestants of Antwerp were multiplying Bibles and starting them to England. Bertrand stayed to dinner, and after, when Lady Melton would rest, we walked in the garden. I made him tell me his recollections of France, of Monsieur Raymond's mother, of Raymond's boyhood, and about the girls, of course. Bertrand is singularly interested in Rochester. He says he is coming over here often to look at old documents telling of one Gundulph, who repaired the castle after a siege. He wants to know how much he built. It was five hundred years ago, so I should not think he would care. Bertrand is very learned. How can he be otherwise? for I think he reads every book men speak of. This afternoon he told me of a poet living here in England who hath writ a long sort of fairy-tale in verse, and dedicated it to Queen Elizabeth. He quoted some lines of this poet, and wrote them on a little tablet for me. We had spoken of Jeanne's marriage, and I think that must have been in his mind. This Mr. Edmund Spenser might have meant Jeanne any way, only her eyes are black:

“Tell me, ye merchants’ daughters, did ye see
So fayre a creature in your town before,
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild is she,
Adorned with beautyes grace and virtues store?
But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnisht with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Unspotted faith and comely womanhood,
Regard of honor and mild modesty,
Then would ye wonder and her prayes sing,
That all the woods should answer and your echo ring.”

He recited it very musically, only leaving out some lines, he said. It was very like Jeanne, all but the part he spoke—looking not quite as usual—about “goodly eyes like saphyres shining bright, her forehead ivory white.”

Giles came to say the horse he had ordered to be ready at that hour stood in waiting. But for the sun-dial near us Bertrand would have thought it scarce past mid-day, so he vowed, and he seemed put about. One thing was sure, he had not time to learn any stories of old Gundulph that day. He had kept me too long from Lady Melton, however, and I forebore not to say so, it being true.

I hastened back to her, striving to interest

her by all Bertrand had said, and I read her the poetry. I made her quite talkative. She smiled when I spoke of Jeanne, and she said it was a rare good thing for young maidens to grow up away from courts and worldly influence. Her eyes grew soft and tearful once as she let me kiss her thin cheeks. She said she would fear to leave me, but for my new friends. I was very ignorant of the ways of the world. I reminded her she had but just said that sort of ignorance was a good thing. She said, "Oh, Sophie! little maid! Thou wilt soon be wiser about some matters than thou now art." After that she let me sing to her two or three hymns that she likes greatly, and we said together the twenty-third psalm. Twice over she said, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Before I went to bed that night she spoke again of my going to stay with the Berciers if she should die ere Hubert married. Of a sudden I spoke out a thought that came to me only that day. I asked her if for any cause it were not quite the best thing for me to stay with the pastor's family, I might not abide with Marjory Nelson. She is a God-fearing and a sensible

woman. Her house is neat, and such part of it as pertained to me while I stayed there was apart from every place open to the public. Catherine her daughter would be to me a maid if I needed her services. Lady Melton thought of all a while, and said, "If Madame Bercier approve, it might not be amiss."

CHAPTER XII.

DEATH.

IT was a beautiful day of the early summer. A fine golden light seemed to fall like a shower on the streets of Canterbury, on the meadows and woodland, on the ancient buildings and the distant upland. Pastor Bercier and Bertrand had gone to their daily duties. Madame, having removed the remains of breakfast, was about to feed her poultry when a messenger came to her from the village, as she always called Canterbury proper. Marjory Nelson sent her word that Lady Melton had gone. Her death had been painless. The body was to be taken to London for interment in the family tomb in the church of St. Bartholomew the Great. Her relatives would attend to that, and Sophie, after carrying out a few instructions in regard to her ladyship's personal effects, would be ready to come to Madame Bercier. Two journeys to Rochester in as many months

were great events in madame's life, but it seemed to her a duty to go for Sophie. She arranged to accompany Marjory Nelson and her son, who would return with the man bringing the message. Her ladyship had left certain household stuff of a common kind to her former servant.

Jeanne and Marie, left alone, had enough to do and to say. The two girls had occupied a little room having a big fireplace and a low broad window. Overhead were the oaken beams, outside was a view over the garden to the forest. Inside was dainty neatness.

"Marie," said Jeanne, "doubtless Sophie hath been used to finer chambers than this of ours, and above all she may desire to be alone. The little south room where Mère Bercier dryeth her herbs, what of that?"

"If we remove the herbs elsewhere, they will have left but a spicy odor. If we put there of our best, it will be as good as the house can offer," replied Marie.

"I could go sleep there," continued Jeanne, "and let Sophie be here."

"Nay, nay, I cannot spare thee, and Sophie and I are but strangers in a way."

"Strangers!" echoed Jeanne slowly. "Why, to me she seemeth already"—she blushed as she added, "like a sister. How glad am I, if she will live with us, that she is not one disagreeable to me; for in that case Hubert would still be bound to shelter her. I doubt much, though, if she ever return to Leyden unless it be for a visit."

Jeanne glanced at Marie with a pretty air, half important, half mysterious, and was surprised when Marie went on with her work, not even turning her head.

"Marie," she said plainly then, "I will give thee a hint of a secret. Hubert told me that Bertrand finds Sophie the most beautiful and gracious creature he hath ever looked upon. Think of it! I never thought he would look away from his Greek and his Latin long enough to see beauty, unless it were in the stone carving of a choir."

"None hinted aught of that to me, but I thought it," said Marie, adding quickly, "I go to take away the herbs and other things that Mère Bercier hath stored in the room. I leave thee to choose what furnishing we carry there."

Alone in the bare little chamber fragrant with faint perfumes of sweet herbs, Marie lingered long over her light task. With splendid health, with exuberant animal spirits, with a warm heart and lively fancy, Marie's life had been the happiest possible. She was too young when in France to know that life outside the chateau meant not the careless existence she had led in the old home—too happy in England to think that the future might not always be like the present. She was naturally more stirring in a housewifely way than Jeanne, and so helped Mère Bercier about her pleasant tasks. She was fond of society, and went among her country-people, making every young person her friend. She had from the first been an energetic little helper for the pastor. As for Bertrand, from boyhood he had told her every plan or aspiration. They had quarreled, teased one another, and then made common cause against outside interference. Whatever Bertrand wanted made, mended, watched, or cared for he put into Marie's charge. She seldom asked him to do anything for her, but she tested all her thoughts and deeds by Bertrand's theories. She might mock and contradict him—she usually

did—but she had never taken a step of which he disapproved. She fancied they would always go on in this way. When the pastor should grow old and die, Bertrand would take up his duties. When Mère Bercier should become too feeble to minister to Bertrand, of course Marie would be the one to look out for his comfort.

To-day dark new fancies crept into Marie's mind, displacing the old pleasant ones. When Jeanne should go away, another bright young life would come in. Sophie was very entertaining; she had seen considerable fine society, and evenings she would hold all their attention. The pastor would smile on her, and Bertrand put down his book to listen intently. She could sing, filling the house with melody. Marie had no accomplishments. She was not jealous. She saw plainly how lovely and attractive was this new-comer. If—if as Jeanne had said—and Marie, with a rising sob, reflected that some time there would not be here any need of another besides Bertrand's mother and Bertrand's wife. In that case she herself might possibly go to Jeanne, but could any place in the world be so dear as Canterbury? No one had occasion to tell her what she had seen for

herself. In Rochester had Bertrand been aware of any one but Sophie? Even Raymond, who knew her of old, could scarcely get speech with her when Bertrand was near. Now she was to be ever here—always in their merry-makings, present at every evening talk, by their side on Sunday in the cathedral. A great tide of loneliness swept over Marie, as if she were now suddenly to be shut out of a sunny garden that she but just realized had been a sort of paradise. She heard Jeanne coming, and sprang up to seem busy at her work.

Madame Bercier returned the fourth day, and Sophie with her. Sophie was a little pale and tearful when the talk recalled Lady Melton. Every one petted her. Marie learned her first lesson in unselfishness in trying to make the guest at home. Hitherto it had been only a pleasure to do for all in the household. She did not dislike Sophie, and it was an undefined pain this new experience in the once gay little Marie's heart. Young French girls who were well brought up were not given to thoughts of love and lovers. When it came time for them to marry, their parents were the ones to think and to plan. Marie did not know that she

loved Bertrand with all the intensity of her girlish heart, and that for this reason it was she was hurt to feel that all his love was a quick gift to the new-comer. That Sophie might not love Bertrand never occurred to her. Was he not to Marie like Sir Galahad?

A letter came from Hubert telling of a fine old house he had secured, of the people to whom he would proudly show his bride, of the liberty enjoyed in Leyden, and the excellent religious and intellectual tone of society there. Withal there were kind, brotherly messages to Sophie.

Time ran along with our friends, and Sophie endeared herself to all the pastor's family. She helped Mère Bercier about the house, so that Marie could sit with Jeanne, who made ready her trousseau. It was not grand, this bridal outfit, but Raymond had taken care that his sister should not have to go to Leyden a portionless bride.

One day, as Sophie was about her light tasks, Jeanne came to her, saying, "The queerest fellow that ever I saw is at the door and asketh for thee. He is clean and well-dressed, but hunchbacked—a dwarf—"

She said no more, for Sophie darted past her, crying, "'Tis Jacob, my good Jacob, I doubt not!"

Jacob it was, who seemed utterly abashed at her appearance. He colored, stammered, and did obeisance as if to the queen, after one long stare of surprise.

"Why, Jacob, my faithful old guardian! Have I changed so much?" cried Sophie as it dawned on her that Jacob expected to find her little, lean, and poorly clad—the same Sophie he lost in London. He was himself much improved, and but for his deformity had quite the air of a wage-earner doing profitable work. He told her when she had made him cordially welcome that after he had lost her he found steady work at boat-building. He had been frugal and industrious, never giving up the hope of hearing from Hubert. Lately a man from Leyden had told him where Hubert was, and that friends of his were in Canterbury. From following up every clue he had found out more. He came to see Sophie first, and was about to return to the Netherlands. He was homesick, had laid up his wages, and was going to find Hubert. The entire family welcomed him after

this statement, and many were the messages sent to Hubert by him. After a visit of a few hours he returned to Canterbury, and thence went to Dover and Holland.

CHAPTER XIII.

SOPHIE'S JOURNAL AGAIN.

LAST night I overheard Jeanne say to Madame Bercier, "In that case may I not take dear little Marie with me to Leyden?" I wish I did not begin to feel sure of what I would not for a while let stay in my thoughts. Madame Bercier hath once or twice begun as if she had somewhat to say to me of uncommon import, then ceased. Now almost I wish she would utter it, lest it come to me another way.

It hath come! Yesterday was a midsummer day, and in the afternoon Madame Bercier saith to us young people, "Let us go walk to St. Martin's on the hill." So we went. I kept ever by Jeanne, talking of Leyden, but, how it happened I cannot tell (unless by Mère Bercier's own willing), Bertrand delayed me to pluck wild roses. Madame and the girls were just beyond hearing if one talked not loudly. He is so very lovable! Once have I seen a face painted in Italy by a friar whom men called

“Angelico,” because he put such purity into his pictured faces. Bertrand hath such goodness in his.

I am very sorry. Bertrand loveth me, and would have me for his wife. He hath told all to his mother, his father, and Hubert: all wish it might be, *but it cannot be*. He began to speak fast to show me he could wait; then, seeing how he grieved me—for much it hurt me to hurt him—he ceased. He tore his hands with thorns, but struggled till he plucked the fairest rose. He gave it me, saying he would then be like a priest, who giveth his life to good works and his love only to heaven. We went on, and found the others sitting among the pink daisies between the graves. Marie was softly crying by herself. Mère Bercier thought it was for a sweet little child buried here yester-week, one Marie loved. Mayhap it was, but of late I do perceive some things in Marie that none seem to heed. I will keep them to myself, but I will pray every night that no hurt, but rather a blessing, come through my stay here.

Mère Bercier hath spoken. She is sorry, but blameth me in no wise. I asked her if it were not better that I go now to Marjory Nelson, but

she saith no. She added, a little proudly, that her Bertrand was no baby to wail for what he might not have. She hath quite a little innocent pride, this dear good mother. She doth not wish the girls to know aught of what hath happened, as if I could tell them!

I am making Marie sing with me. None have made enough of her voice. There is a ballad I have taught her that maketh tears come to hear, such heart she putteth into it. I was glad to-night because Jeanne made her sing it for us. Bertrand said, "Why, little one, thy notes are like a thrush's."

To-day Jeanne, Bertrand and I were in the garden, and I talked that plainly to them that to-night I shall make apology in some sort. They love Marie, but they have thought so long of her as a giddy child that they do not see she is now a wise and really sensitive maiden. Bertrand hurt her by saying she had torn her gown climbing trees for the birds' nests. 'Twas by a chance I knew she had been down in a miserable hovel nursing a sick child. I scolded them; Jeanne laughed and kissed me. Bertrand stared as if he never knew before that Marie was seventeen years old.

Yes, I will apologize to-night for plain speaking, and so get one more chance to let him know there are more maidens than one in the world. . . . Bertrand says I need make no excuses—that he has indeed been very careless of Marie's feelings. It seems to just strike him that she is changed, that she does not tease or mock him now-a-days. I asked him how long he had known her and all about their childish plays. Marie came as he was telling of the old garden of the Raymond chateau. She joined our talk, and grew so animated that her blue eyes sparkled and her cheeks were like the English hedge-roses. I said, "Marie, you make me think of a poem that Bertrand was saying Mr. Spenser has writ.—Tell it to her, Bertrand."

He looked a bit displeased at me—why should he? He is not quite a saint, after all, but he quoted it right prettily to Marie, and when he ended he saith, "Moreover, of a truth it fits well."

Marie blushed, and made as if to mock him, but a little after tears that he did not see came into her eyes. Please God, I will have her happier if I can do aught to make her so.

A long letter hath come from Monsieur Ray-

mond telling of affairs in France, and full of admiration for his hero, King Henry of Navarre. Pastor Bercier cannot see that all looketh so hopeful as monsieur saith. He does not doubt but King Henry will in time obtain the highest place. He only fears that to obtain it he will betray his Lord and Master. At the worst he (the pastor) says Henry will not persecute the Huguenots; but to have Henry of Navarre become a Roman Catholic, if not a persecutor, would be a bitter humiliation to the Huguenots. Jeanne is very sadly disappointed because her brother thinks that he cannot take the long, expensive journey in order to see her married. He says he will visit her in Leyden instead, if all goes well. He does not know that this will be a double wedding, and he will be surprised, I do imagine, for he seemed ever to speak of Marie as a child.

Marie is of the same age as myself, yet he did not talk to me in the same playful manner. He was a trifle constrained, as if he approved not wholly of me, unless I mistake. I take it not as kind that when he sees me no more he forgets my existence or ever to send even a mes-

sage. Ah, well! In those Antwerp days I was a child with naught to think of but the friends in the house. He only knew me for a waif kept by Vrouw Van Schendel. Mayhap none ever told him that the Volmer blood was as good as any in the Netherlands. When he cometh to Leyden, if so be I am also there, it behoveth me to hold myself a little more haughtily. He might at least have writ one civil word to me, when he forgot not to ask that somebody thank again old Giles for a favor done to monsieur.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHATEAU.

ONE afternoon in November the late sun shone warmly on the old chateau of the Raymonds. It illumined the dark towers of the near castle, it sparkled on the waters of the stream, and but for the drying foliage one would not have thought November had come. A man in a mood by no means jubilant, to judge from his grave face, was pacing up and down the old garden-walks.

These were the saddest days in Louis Raymond's life. He was wondering if he could still be a young man and have so much of life, its joys, loves, hopes, experiences, all behind him. His boyhood had been very happy here, but what had made it brightest lay under the sod of the near churchyard, where he now carried the roses that still bloomed in the garden. The rooms, dismantled and cheerless, sent a chill through him when he crossed their

threshold. Curiosity had taken him that day over the old castle, occupied now by a few decrepit servants. Raymond almost wished his enemy the Count d'Estre were alive and at home, that he might do battle with him for the estate that now was his own without contest. The wish aroused him, and he began to rate himself aloud: "'Tis time I rid me of these melancholic moods. Because I can no longer fight, must I cease to be endurable to myself or of use to my neighbor? Let me thank God that I dealt some thick blows and hot at the persecutors of my Church, then set myself a task for days to come."

This last was far from easy. Raymond seemed to himself old because his past had been so full. He had studied, traveled, made many friends, fought in Holland, and again in France; never at rest, always moved by some new enthusiasm. He was now incapable of long marches, of the fatigues of camp-life. He must fight his battles by the fireside; what he had recovered of his patrimony removed him from poverty. He almost wished it had not, that he might become a wanderer; as it was, he had duties to his neighbors.

Up and down the garden he paced, his thoughts reverting to Jeanne, Marie and the cheerful English home. He was glad to think of Jeanne's happiness, of Hubert's love for his beautiful young sister. They would make another home in Leyden like that of the first Van Schendel. How curiously his friends' lives were intertwined! French Jeanne a Hollander's wife; Sophie, the child of the once-proud Dutch Volmers, wedding a poor Huguenot pastor's son, their children growing up in England. Sophie!

The sunshine faded off the castle towers, the daylight melted into gray twilight, while Louis recalled every change of Sophie's radiant face, saw the varying color of her cheeks, while the near roses of the garden turned gray, remembered the tenderness, the fun, the questioning of her blue eyes, until the stars came out.

A shrill voice suddenly called, "Monsieur! monsieur!"

"Is it you, Julie?" he answered, turning toward the house, on whose door-stone he saw a figure.

"'Tis I," answered the faithful creature, who had once been the main stay of their

domestic economy. "And, if I may speak out my mind, monsieur, 'tis that you will take some fever or other distemper in the damps of that old garden at night. May I come in to talk with you?"

"You are welcome, my good Julie, for I am tired of the society of dead ancestors. I have none other within these walls now-a-days."

"'Tis just of that I would speak," she said, half under her breath, as he prepared to start a fire in the fireplace. The house seemed even more cheerless than the garden.

"I cannot offer you sup or morsel," he laughed, "for even in camp I never learned cookery. When I hunger I eat in the inn over the bridge."

"And you eat too little there, the innkeeper's wife tells me," said Julie, as she sat twirling her thumbs in a way Louis remembered of old.

"What is it, Julie? I well remember that when you came to my mother with tales of goodies stolen from the larder or of noisy pranks in the storerooms, you were wont thus to twirl your thumbs."

Thus encouraged, Julie began: "'Tis most gloomy here, monsieur—ghosts and rats and

only you ! Let me come back : let me come on the morrow. You say you will stay here in time to come ; then, as you are not poor, go buy furnishings and make the old home pleasant. Get horses for riding, buy cows for me to make butter and cheese, sit at your own table."

"And make merry with my shadow on the wall?" he asked, half bitterly.

"Monsieur, you are well favored ; whose family is better than your own ? There are young maidens in many a Huguenot family not a hundred leagues distant. Why not seek out a fair, sweet wife to sit with you ?"

"Speak not of that, Julie," he said, sharply : "I have no mind to marry."

"Well, thy sister Jeanne. I mistake the stuff she is made of if she will not want her man and her little ones to see the home she played in, and where her mother, yea her great-grand-mother before her, all of them, were born and died."

"True, she might visit me, but times are troublous ; 'tis a long, long way to Leyden. Once she gets the home-nest warm, she will be no rover."

"And Marie ? Is little hot-headed Marie

turned to a cold, dull Englishwoman so soon? Has she no love for the old home?"

Louis stared at her as if a sudden train of thought, of recollections, had been awakened by her words. After a long silence he said slowly, "Julie, you may come back. I will make the old house comfortable at least; you shall help me. I will get the new after the pattern of the old and restore the chateau."

Julie was overjoyed, but, seeing Louis absorbed in thought, she wisely restrained her tongue, bade him good-night, and went away happy.

It had come to Louis with great force that he had been very thoughtless about his young cousin Marie. She seemed as near to him, and almost as dear in the same sisterly way, as did Jeanne. While in Canterbury she had been so much a part of the Bercier establishment, of all their home interests, that he had forgotten that she was, after all, a Raymond. The chateau was her earliest home, her father's before her. Ought Marie not to be his charge? He was leaving her dependent on the Berciers, although they regarded her as a daughter, and doubtless she repaid their love a hundredfold. But things

were changing now. Soon young Bercier would take Sophie for his wife. Might not that change everything? If the old people died, Sophie and Bertrand might have interests apart from Marie, who was really no kin. Louis felt convinced that he had been blameworthy and selfish in his personal grief at loving and losing Sophie. The longer he pondered the more he understood other things, noticed but not reflected on hitherto. Toward the latter part of his stay in Canterbury, Marie had been very silent, often sad. Could this marriage of Bertrand to Sophie have *hurt her too*? Poor little one! He recalled her face as they had walked together, Jeanne and Hubert, Sophie and Bertrand. She looked as he had felt at those times. He resolved to beg her to make her home hereafter in the old chateau. They had a distant relative, a gentle old spinster of mature age, who could come as housekeeper and companion, for Marie would need other company than Julie.

Some way, as Louis sat before the fire and planned all this, he felt less solitary, less desolate. When a mouse fled across the corner he was cheered by the fancy of home voices, com-

mon sights and sounds of domestic life, about him once more.

Later his thoughts returned to his own life. What should it be? What had it been? *What is a man's life?*

In the silence of that night Louis questioned his soul. He had been a man of action, not a thinker, more practical than spiritual—a Huguenot—first, because of his ancestry; secondly, because of his intellectual rejection of the teachings of the Romish Church. This night he asked himself what his Christianity meant? What he was doing for others with it? What it was doing in him? He arose at last, and searched (he was not so dull that he did not think of the inconsistency of his acts) until he found his neglected Bible, then seated himself to read.

The book fell apart at the chapter respecting the Christian armor. Its phrasing caught the Huguenot soldier's eye. He read slowly, thoughtfully. He turned to the gospels next, reading the fourteenth and fifteenth of St. John. He closed the book at last, saying, "I have been a Huguenot. Whether or no I have been a Christian God alone knows. Henceforth

I must know. A poor soldier he who cannot tell the colors he has fought under. Verily, it seemeth to me that I have worshiped King Henry of Navarre instead of the Nazarene.—Jesus, thou Captain of my salvation, I give myself to thee, soul and body, this night. I can no longer fight in earthly battlefields, but I can fight the good fight of faith. My prince Henry may fail me—my heart misgiveth me about him of late—but thou art the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.”

It was past midnight when Louis Raymond rose from his kneeling-place on the desolate hearth of his ancestors, but he was no longer melancholy or weary of life. The fire had gone out, yet his heart burned within him; as never before he was ready for life or for death.

CHAPTER XV.

SOPHIE'S JOURNAL (*Continued*).

MARIE is very ill—Jeanne and I have been banished to Marjory Nelson's house. Mère Bercier has a nurse to help her in our stead. Marie has of late been constantly among the poor and hath taken a low fever. Bertrand saith it would astonish us to know how she is loved by the poor, the afflicted and the children among the Huguenots here. He saith she was ever coming and going in their houses, and he takes shame to himself that he fancied it was for gossip or just her pleasure. Old folks tell how she was like sunshine dancing in at the door; now the children come asking for her, and people bring broths and fruit for her; but she cannot see any one but the nurses.

To-night Jeanne said to Bertrand, between her sobs, "How terrible if our little Marie should die! How can Sophie and I leave the dear

mother all alone? Only think of home with *no Marie!*"

I never saw Bertrand so shocked. "Without Marie!" he exclaimed. "Don't *speak* of such a thing!" and he went home, never telling a message that madame had sent us. . . .

It is now ten weeks since Marie was taken with her fever, and until to-day she hath not been out of her room.

This afternoon we made a beautiful fire on the hearth and heaped up soft rugs and cushions before it. Then Bertrand lifted her like a little child in his arms and fetched her down stairs. We have been very merry, and a soft little color has got into her white cheeks. She hath an appetite now, and we feasted together, rejoicing over her greatly. . . .

Marie gets better every day. Yesterday we were alone together and spoke of Jeanne's wedding, that cometh in a little more than two months. She took my hand in her thin, small fingers, saying, "Has Mère Bercier thought it would excite me too much that she never tells me when *you* will be a bride, Sophie?"

May I be forgiven if I put too much astonishment in my voice when I said, "*I, Marie?*"

Whoever has sought *me* out but my good Jacob? To my knowledge none talk of marriage with *me*." Then I slipped away lest she say something better left unsaid. . . .

I was in my chamber dressing to-day when Jeanne came in to hug me before she told me some good news. All the family were together by the fireside half an hour ago, when Bertrand, who had been reading to Marie, laid down his book and looked at her. "To whom does Marie belong most of all?" he asked, laughing a little at their surprise.

"Belong?" echoed his mother; "why, she belongeth to—to—all of us—to Raymond and Jeanne by ties of blood, to us by love."

"If a lover cometh he must know of whom first to ask her hand." Jeanne saith Marie grew pale, not red; then Bertrand put suddenly his arm about her, saying, "Mother, I want her to belong *most* of all to me. I love her, and I hope God will let her live to be my wife and thy beloved daughter, if thou canst love her even better than thou dost."

Marie had blushes enough by that time, for the pastor blessed them, madame embraced both and Bertrand kissed his betrothed, who

did not say "Nay" if she did not say "Yea," being so taken by storm, as it were.

Every one in the house is content. There will be two weddings at Christmas-tide.

Mothers have pride that is funny. Mère Bercier droppeth little sayings in these days to the effect that Bertrand hath loved Marie so long he knoweth not when that love began. She hath truth in thus saying. He was but awakened by a new presence, a fancy soon banished. I agree with Mère Bercier that no wife could be better for Bertrand. Her feet will be on earth if ever his head getteth among the clouds. I rejoice, but I am lonely without Lady Melton.

Every one is busy. Jeanne and Marie are ever sewing and embroidering. Mère Bercier hath saved money enough to build two more rooms to the little house. These will be for the bride. All are very happy. I could almost wish I were in Leyden. There must I find work wherewith to employ my thoughts and fingers. Here I get more restless and not happier. I have been visiting the sick in Marie's stead.

To-day is Sunday, and all are gone to the

cathedral. I have taken cold, and Mère Bercier hath given me a warm draught and bidden me stay quiet by the fireside until they return, for it is a bitter day—a bitter cold day without, but warm and sunny within. When I wrote last in my journal I put down but scant measure of the melancholic thoughts with which my heart was over full. Never, even in Antwerp streets as a homeless child—never in Leyden as an ill-used, forsaken girl—was I more miserable. Three days ago it was the first day of December. Every one in the house, even the cat, sang with contentment. I was glad for them, but I wanted to get away a little while from talk of household stuff. Not far away is a pretty place where in summer we have often been. I had a fancy to see the ruined old abbey now when the wild flowers are no longer blossoming in the empty window-frames and the ivy sways in the cold winds. It was not desolate, after all, but very beautiful. The flowers were gone, but the holly-berries were bright, the ivy green, and the wind moaned softly through the old arches and aisles as if doves were cooing somewhere out of sight. I found a very old stone that I never saw before,

on which was cut, "Pray for the soul of Hugh de ——;" the rest of the name was gone. I suppose he belonged to the abbey before its ruin. I wondered if it were well now with his soul and if he ever thought of this old stone. If he be in Paradise, he might better pray for the mortals who are down here with his stone than they for him. Then I used it for a seat.

It was not yet five o'clock when the sun faded behind the soft gray clouds and a feathery snow began to float down, the first of the long winter to come. Two or three sheep strayed into the fields by the ruins. By and by a new moon came out, and then a party of hunters, clad all in scarlet, rode past, going home from the chase. It was all such a beautiful picture, so unlike anything I had ever seen, that I stayed looking at the great floating snow-feathers until I was cold; and caught cold too. But I would not have missed the pretty sight for anything.

That was not all, either. My heart grew warm as my body grew chill. It came to me that God was good, and I only was ungrateful. Just as before that spring day under the oak trees at Chelsea I loved him for his wonderful goodness. I was no longer lonely. I had two

homes: the Berciers were my friends, they loved me most unselfishly; then there was Hubert. I sat so still, thinking myself into peace again, that the snow fell in my lap and a little brown bird lit on the holly branch I held. Then I came home with a Bible verse or two that said to me over and over, "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even for evermore."

I hastened when once I came out on the highway, for I would not that the darkness should overtake me. As yet there was a most strange light over the land—a light as of the snow, the moon, and the twilight together. The road was not good, the way across fields much longer, and I repented me that I was late, when I heard a horse behind me, and the voice of one urging him onward. Soon the horseman caught up with me, so I hastened as best I could without showing my fright, for I knew that he kept pace and watched me. Truly it was no fit hour for a maiden to be out alone, and much I wished I had not on my blue mantle, which is too fine to belong to any but a lady.

My heart stood still when the man leaped to the ground and approached me.

"Is it you, Sophie?" he exclaimed, and before he said my name I knew it was Hubert. How glad I was to see him! My dear good brother! the only one left in all the world on whose affection I can rely. Of course these new friends are all kindness, but deep roots can belong only to old plants. Hubert embraced me, chiding me at the same time for being venturesome in walking so late. Then naught would do but I must ride home while he went at my side. It goes without saying that I must tell him of Jeanne first, and then of other matters. He was beyond measure astonished that Marie would marry Bertrand, saying he did think him sure to wed—I did at that stop his utterance of the name by entreaty, begging him never to ask question of me or whisper suspicion to Jeanne. He marveled, but he made promise. Thus we talked until we were at the cottage, seeing first the lights from the windows, the red glow of the fire on the hearth with figures passing to and fro. Hubert made sure he saw Jeanne.

They were not expecting Hubert quite so soon, but how they welcomed him! We Dutch

and the English are not so open, so exuberant in our joy as the French, but theirs when sincere is most charming to see. All kissed Hubert, the good pastor first on one cheek, then on the other. Madame heaped fagots on the fire, and ran hither and thither to add new goodies to the supper. Jeanne was the quietest of all, but her eyes were like stars.

After supper (and madame made it a feast) there were a great many things to discuss. It is beautiful to see other people very happy, to have time to sit by quietly, to listen, and pray God to keep them always blessed and in his care.

Bertrand was rather ill at ease for a time, but I guessed the reason. When he saw Hubert last he was— He had not found out his love for Marie. I watched my chance to whisper to him that Hubert said that next to Jeanne Marie would be the wife a man could have, or some light pleasant thing like that. He looked at me strangely, then he said very softly, very earnestly, "I love her, Sophie."

I had stayed too long in the cold of the ruins; shivers ran over me, so at last I begged them to let me go to my bed. I could not

sleep there, but I could watch the stars and wonder, question, decide, and then be again in doubt about what I will do in the future. I am not poor; I shall be no burden on any one, thanks be to God and Lady Melton! I can stay here, but the house is small, the family complete without me. I can go to Leyden, and my inclinations are that way. If Hubert were in very truth my brother, I would not for one moment hesitate. He is not nearer related than to Jeanne; when once they are man and wife—I know not, I may be wrong, but an outsider is ever outside, and should be. A man needs only wife, mother, or sister; no other woman's love or influence works for good in the home.

I might go lodge with Marjory Nelson after a time. So I thought and thought until toward morning, when I fell asleep.

In the day that followed all my questions found answer. Surely God moves people as he likes, and doth strange things. Hubert next morning, when I appeared, did make me a bow so profound that I would know if he were practising for a courtier. He made answer no, but that by a turn of fortune's wheel I was now

a great heiress and not one to be treated with scant ceremony.

"Truly," said I, "I was as much of an heiress as Lady Melton could make me ere you went hence months ago; but you were not then oppressed by thoughts of my grandeur. Let it not overwhelm you now."

"But, Sophie dear, I have a great piece of news for thee," he answered in the old brotherly tone that I remember so well as a child—the tender "Thee." "Jacob was born to be thy guardian angel, though never did angel masquerade in less angelic body. Thou knowest he has been of late with me in Leyden, and of great use have I found him. Travel and the fortunes of his life since he lived with us have greatly sharpened his wits and his judgment. He could not be more honest or faithful. Well, about a month gone there was a small matter of business I had need to have done in Rotterdam. It was a simple affair, only to take a certain paper to some man of the law, an errand at the town-hall, and details of such sort. I bethought me to send Jacob, who is ever glad to go from town to town, for he knoweth folk in Leyden, Delft, Haarlem, and every city there-

abouts, it seemeth to me. He was most willing, and set forth proud of his errand. It was all done, but so late one day that it seemed wise to stay the night. The law-paper being delivered, he did not at the moment understand that nothing was to be returned to me, and so waited, standing aside for others with mightier business. While waiting he overheard one say to another, "'Tis most curious how many times some estates have changed hands in these last troublous years! Vast properties have been lost, stolen, confiscated. Again, some titles are as good to-day as they were fifty years ago. There was an Andreas Volmar here. He died, leaving a large fortune well invested and protected. No heir has yet been able to establish a claim to it."

"You may imagine," said Hubert, "that Jacob pricked up his ears at the name Volmar. He listened to much more on the same subject, and came home full of it. I went at once to Rotterdam, and found out enough to show that the Volmar estates are large and will belong to you if your claim is established. I will give you fuller facts later on, but at this stage of affairs nothing can be done without you. You must

go back to tell all you know of your father and his family. It will, they say, be easy to establish your relationship to the extinct Antwerp Volmars. Your mother did that before she died. Then, Sophie, you are the heiress that Jacob declared you were that night when he found you in the cold and dark. You must come back with Jeanne and me now, any way."

I am very, very glad at the prospect of riches. I was wickedly glad in a worldly, hard way at first. I said away down in my heart, "*Now*, Monsieur Louis Raymond of the Raymonds who have flourished for centuries, I will show you that the little orphan of Antwerp is a Volmar, and the Volmars are as ancient and as good as the dead Raymonds. The living will be very much richer." Then I was ashamed, and *now* what makes me happiest is to think that I can save from want poor houseless orphans like myself, and sad, helpless widows like my young mother. I can do to others what God's children did for me when I was cold and hungry. I can work for souls too—can help such men as Pastor Bercier to carry God's word to the ignorant. I have asked God for Christ's sake not to give me this gold if I will not spend

it aright. I do not want riches in order to lead such a life as Lady Melton led, to have such bitter remembrances of folly as she suffered from. . . .

It seemeth to me that I have lived in Leyden more than the six months which have passed this June day since I set foot again in Holland. I have not writ one page in this journal since I was in Canterbury. Now I will go back and take up the story for Jeanne's grandchildren if so be she have them.

That was a happy, tearful time, a green Christmas, when roses blossomed in Mère Bercier's garden, and both brides wore posies of the white ones. The marriages were performed in the grand cathedral, or in one corner of it; Pastor Bercier married Hubert and Jeanne in that part of the great building where the Huguenots may worship. It was cold and dismal, but the bride and groom had life and color enough to bring cheer even into the crypt. Bertrand has gone over into the Church of England: a clergyman friend of his married him and Marie in a chapel under a wonderful glass window. Bertrand looked more than ever like the picture of St. John. People ask how can a Huguenot and an Anglican priest keep

the peace. They don't know Pastor Bercier or Bertrand. They do not think alike about forms, but they love the same Saviour with all their heart. How could such Christians quarrel? Bertrand's teachers say he will rise in the Church—not from ambition, but he is sure to become learned, and when he talks of religion he gets very eloquent, I am told.

After the church service there was a festival at the house, where many friends were invited. Everybody loves Jeanne, Marie, and Bertrand. There was plenty of merriment and feasting, with gifts for the brides, and for a week after friends fêted and made much of them.

After that week Hubert, Jeanne, and I set sail from Dover to Rotterdam. It was a long, greatly perilous voyage at that season. Much did we suffer ere we came to land, though I was far better quartered than when I crossed with Jacob, my faithful Jacob!

Everything Dutch was so new to Jeanne, she might have been homesick many times before we reached Leyden but for Hubert. He was very funny in his tenderness for her, and must needs undertake to talk only French to her, and a Dutchman doing that is oftentimes comical. It

was laughing at him that kept Jeanne from tears.

But when, after many weary days, we came to Leyden to the pretty old house in the Klok-Steeg, close by the Pieters-Kerk Plads, it was happiness. Just such sunny rooms with rich furnishings as in the Van Schendels' old home; indeed, many things had Hubert saved from that home, and there were Dorothy and Jacob. Dorothy was much older and very fat, but as good-natured and twice as capable as when I knew her in Antwerp. That night when Hubert prayed I did wish his father and mother could have heard him. When we rose from our knees he pointed to the beautiful new carving in oak over the great fireplace, and said to Jeanne, "My wife will help me keep that vow." Then I saw cut there the words, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

There has been much law-business since I returned, much searching of records of marriages, deaths, and christenings; but at length, this day week came I into what seemeth to me a great fortune. I have entreated of Hubert and Jeanne to keep the fact as closely as may be. I want to make sure that any new friends

seek me for myself. I learned only too well when with Lady Melton how gold doth attract flatterers as honey flies. Only I will now that any who have needs that I can minister to find me a true and kindly helper.

I am fond of this old city, for 'tis one of the most ancient of Holland, and I think it right pleasant. Those who were here through the siege from October to March, about sixteen years ago, say it suffered much. I can well believe it, for I see the traces, even if people were not always telling how many then starved to death. But now the people are happy and prosperous. After Prince William of Orange pierced the dykes and saved the city, he rewarded the citizens for their bravery by offering to exempt them from taxes for a number of years or to found a university. They chose the school, and since 1575 it has flourished greatly. There are many learned professors here and students from various parts. There is a very old burg in the centre of the town, much over five hundred years old, and near our house is the great church of St. Peter, about three hundred years old, a most rich and beautiful church, with monuments of distinguished families. I am

proud to be a Dutchwoman. The queer old city is even more strange-seeming to Jeanne than to me, so we oft take walks about it, exploring old buildings. She is fast learning Dutch, and I no longer need to translate to her the old wives' stories of the Spaniards or the siege. Hubert makes love to her now in his own tongue, and he doth it as if he were but yesterday betrothed. My constant attendant, and him whom I most encourage, is Jacob. The affection he has for me is somewhat like a father's, but more that of a huge dog. He has entered my service for life. Verily, the gravest would laugh to see his pride in certain new garments. 'Tis no livery ever seen before on mortal servitor, but a mixture of the garbs of footman, soldier, sailor, and rustic, and it being new and most conspicuous, he delighteth to roam abroad in it. All know him, and, being friendly, all tell him he is right brave in attire.

These long summer days are very beautiful. We have a garden wherein are all manner of bright blossoms as well as goodly fruit trees. There is a little summer arbor at the bottom over a canal. There we often sit to eat and drink while we chat with friends going past

on their boats. Hubert hath many friends, men of worth, of family, better still those who have fought bravely for liberty, or men learned though not old—good men all of them. One thing only I wish were otherwise: two such friends of his would have me to marry. I think to stay single, to give my life to good works like as if I were a Protestant Sister of Charity. Jeanne looketh sober when I say what is my mind touching this, but Hubert only laugheth.

Jeanne this day had a long letter from Canterbury, which was scarce a month in coming, and this for a letter between private folk is not slow. Public documents are sent most marvelously fast in these days by post, by couriers, and what not. Marie writes ten words of Bertrand to three of herself. I believe the archbishop of Canterbury is a smaller man in her eyes. What comes after his praises is grateful news of the pastor's health, that Mère Bercier getteth very stout and rosy, that the summer maketh all Kent like the garden of Eden, and, best of all, God keepeth them in great happiness and peace.

Now, it seemeth that Monsieur Raymond did

not receive the letter wherein Marie did tell him of her betrothal and marriage to be. She knew it not, although she did grieve a little, it now seems, that he wrote her no cousinly words at the time. She has of late heard from him that he has made to be restored, refurnished, and cheerful the old chateau, and he did urge Marie to come make it her home, for that he should never marry. Marie is sorry, but consoleth herself by the knowledge that he has a former servant who maketh him comfortable. She wrote back that he would do well to come once more to Canterbury, where were a choice of young Huguenot maidens that might cause him to alter his purposes.

I have been to Antwerp, and after great bargaining and delay I have purchased the old Van Schendel mansion. With Hubert's help three wise and pious matrons, made homeless by past troubles, have become housekeepers there, and—how my heart leaps to think of it!—twelve little fatherless, motherless girls, like my own once-poor little self, are at home there. The old rooms are full of comforts for them: the table is heaped daily with more food for each than poor, dear Vrouw Van Schendel saw

in a week during the siege. They romp in the garden, and are taught by the good women. My heart almost bursts with joy that I can do this. I go daily alone to one corner of the Pieters-Kerk and beg the blessed Saviour to show me what else I can do. Above all, I implore him to believe that out of love I do it unto these little ones as unto him.

I ought ever to take shame to myself that I am lonely if I can make dark lives bright. We named the home for the little Elizabeth who long ago made Vrouw Van Schendel's heart tender toward me, and if she can know it in heaven I think she smiles.

We have had a very great surprise. We were all, about sunset, in the arbor. Three of Hubert's friends were there: with one was his wife, whom Jeanne liketh well. There was also Herr Engelbertsz, very handsome, good, and wise. But I wish he came not so uselessly and often. Of a sudden came Jacob galloping adown the garden-walk, his face all smiles, and behind him—Monsieur Louis Raymond! Jeanne was beside herself with joy, and Hubert was almost equally delighted. I am, of course, no relative. I bethought me of that, as well as of

other things, for I did feel of a sudden strangely faint; 'twas a hot day. I assured him I was pleased that he had come, and spoke of the pleasure his sister must have in showing him her new home. The gentlemen were soon all at ease together. Monsieur speaks Dutch perfectly. Herr Engelbertsz never appeared better. He was much interested to learn of the Huguenots, and what Raymond thought of Henry of Navarre. Would he be tempted to sell his faith for the crown of France?

Monsieur was much less vehement in his eulogies of his prince than when in Canterbury. He spoke more in the manner of Pastor Bercier as to affairs in France. Herr Engelbertsz (as often) was near to me, and did never forget to offer me cakes and to show me quiet courtesies. It was a relief when our Leyden friends went home.

I enjoy our guest's society greatly, but, as is meet, I leave him much with his own kin.

Men are oftentimes very trying when they would be in jest. Hubert secretly angereth me speaking to-day of Herr Engelbertsz. What matters it to me that he will be a member of the council?

Monsieur Raymond is a much more zealous Christian than he was. When, at prayers, he taketh lead in place of Hubert, I am astonished. . . .

I am for a time at Antwerp. I had need to see the children, to find more work to fill my mind. Jeanne has her house; I had only too much time to think, and I— There is a constraint: 'tis not as it was with Monsieur Raymond when I was little Sophie. We cannot find speech of many matters when left together. I have never meant to carry out my silly whim to show him that a Volmar is as good as a Raymond; but he behaveth himself toward me as grimly as if I had done as I planned.

The little ones here in the home are growing fat. They are happy; I can do nothing more for them. The visit hath made me a little melancholic. I see, in fancy, those who once were in these rooms. In an old chest to-day I came on Elizabeth's wooden doll, and I sat me down and wept. When later I showed that doll to the orphans, they shouted with laughter. 'Tis not a pretty toy, surely. . . .

What has come to me in one day? Yesterday I was alone in the cheerful dining-room,

which is most homelike because always now empty save at meal-times. The door opened, and one entered. I looked not up, supposing it to be one of the house-women.

Monsieur Raymond stood at my side, saying, "Mademoiselle, I saw you in this room first a long time ago. I have ventured to come over to Antwerp to see your good charity in the dear old house."

I told him he was welcome. I gave him full histories of the orphans. Suddenly he said, "Knowest thou that when I left Canterbury I supposed that thou wert the betrothed wife of the pastor's son? I loved thee so I had to flee. I love thee now, with all the love I had then, and tenfold more. I have feared to speak. Thou art a great heiress now. I am not rich, not learned—lame. Herr Engelbertsz is a man far more important."

"And didst thou come all the way from Leyden to Antwerp to plead Herr Engelbertsz's cause? I never found him backward in the past."

"Sophie," he said, "years ago I lifted thee in my arms to yonder shelf and begged thee for something. Thou wast very cruel then: only give it to me now and I shall be answered."

CHAPTER XVI.

NO LONGER EXILES.

AGAIN it is summer, and the world is beautiful. This time we take you not to the dykes and windmills of Holland or to the capricious smiles and tears of an English climate, but to sunny France.

It is a glorious morning, and one might at first fancy that it is the sunlight, the luxuriant foliage, the wealth of flowers alone that make the little hamlet in the valley look so attractive. These add light and color truly, but man's hand has been at work. There are many neat cottages clustering around the old Huguenot chapel; children play about their doors. Once poverty, fear, or persecution had emptied those homes. The chapel has been enlarged; there are monuments over the Raymond graves in the churchyard. There are silk-works now in the hamlet. The old castle even seems to wear a friendly air, covered as it is with creeping vines, with wisteria, and roses. The colors of France

are flying from its tower, but the nobleman who now has entered into possession is a Huguenot, even if a D'Estre.

The chateau itself is little altered, but no one would associate it with desolation, rats, ghosts, or even dead ancestors. In the garden is riotous laughter. A little maid chasing butterflies, with her apron full of blue and yellow violets; she might be little Sophie. She is little Louise Van Schendel Raymond. The uncouth steed that is being fiercely driven up and down is not a dromedary, but a fat hunchback dwarf, Jacob by name. He is the loving slave of a youngster who shows already that he comes of a race who could die for the right, but never knew how to yield.

Jacob was so thoroughly Dutch that he did not at once and gracefully bear transplanting. Julie was from the first hour devoted heart and hand to her new mistress. But did ever Beauty have for an attendant such a Beast? or so Julie expressed herself in secret. There was for a week or more war to the knife between the French servant and the Dutch boor.

Raymond would have left matters to end as they might, but Sophie was wiser. One day she

told Julie of the siege of Antwerp—of the little girl who often hid that no one might see her crying from the pangs of hunger. She asked her to imagine Jacob, hollow-cheeked, lean-ribbed, following the child into corners and leaving in her little hands the bread for which he must have been ravenous.

Julie made no comment; she only blew her nose emphatically, but that night Jacob's dish overflowed with his best-liked food, and ever after he had the freedom of the city—or the kitchen, which was all he asked.

This summer day Monsieur Raymond and his well-beloved wife are busily talking of recent public events.

"Louis, 'tis far, far better than thou didst dare to hope five years ago."

"Ay, that it is! When I knew that my hero, my prince, Henry of Navarre, had knelt in St. Denis and renounced the faith he had sworn to protect—renounced it for the crown of France—my heart was like to break. When I heard that Henry had gone into the Roman Church, I almost forgot that God was in heaven. I said, 'Now indeed will the wicked triumph.' My idol fell for ever, but I love the king—who can do

less? — and, Sophie, how wonderfully did our Father in heaven take us Huguenots up when our earthly protector failed us in a fashion, for utterly fail us he never did!”

“What does this Edict of Nantes for us, Louis? I have not well understood.”

“It seems to mean less to you, dearest, because here, in this little out-of-the-way nook, we Huguenots have never been of importance enough to be meddled with seriously. Having thus always been safe by chance, we can scarce appreciate our new safety by law. Thanks be unto our God, all Huguenots now are safe. This edict grants to us liberty of conscience and of worship, a right to have and to keep public offices, and a chamber of justice to protect our rights. We must, ’tis true, pay tithes to the Church of Rome, but where we have given our heart’s blood we can easily make shift to dole out money. We must keep church holy-days and festivals: so we will in our own way. But, best of all, we can maintain our preachers, and for our protection hold certain fortified places.”

“And but for this edict we would never have seen Pastor Bercier again in the valley?”

“Never, and we would have thought him a

happy exile. Verily, the letter writ to me was a revelation, yet how natural it all was! He grew to youth, manhood, and middle age in this hamlet. He loves France as a Frenchman must. He was grateful for a home in England; but now he ages, and the damp, the fogs, the chilling winter storms afflict him. None would have known it, he says, if God had not opened the way back to his sunny old home. Here are Huguenots who knew him, more who are ready to know and love him. Here is his church, his home, the graves of his fathers."

"They will lament him sorely in Canterbury," said Sophie, "but he says there is a godly youth ready to begin work when he leaves it. Then Bertrand stayeth, and is a bond between the two places."

"Perhaps I do dear good Mère Bercier a wrong," said Louis, smiling, "but I think she will be greatly grieved to give up her cottage with its adornments. It was a far better one there than here, but I—"

"I know well what you would propose. Oh, Louis, how dull are men! Julie and I talked of that three weeks ago. To-morrow carpenters will begin to make snug, comfortable, and larger

the old cottage of the Berciers. Then it will be a small return for all their love to Jeanne and Marie that we fill it with goods and furnishings of a sort to make Mère Bercier sing for joy."

"*We?*" laughed Louis tenderly. "Whose gold is it that is all the time making somebody's heart leap for joy?"

"God's gold," said Sophie, "and thou and I are so blessed in being able to give it away together."

They stood a while in the sunshine in the doorway of their happy home; then Sophie asked, "Do you think this is the end of the persecutions of the Huguenots?"

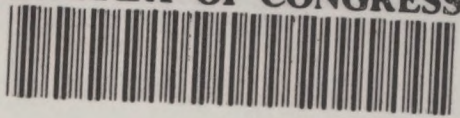
"Who can tell? There may be peace in our day—God grant it!—but I read that Christ said that nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines and pestilences: all these are but the beginnings of sorrow. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

THE END.





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